NATION

SC asks IIT to admit Dalit youth who lost seat over fees

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BUSINESS

BharatPe settles dispute with ex co-founder Ashneer Grover

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SPORTS

Indian shooters win 2 bronzes in Jr World C'ship

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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Will surrender land, CM's wife tells MUDA

In fresh trouble, ED books Siddaramaiah & 3 others in alleged money laundering case

NEW DELHI/BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

In another twist, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife BM Parvathi wrote a letter addressed to MUDA, announcing that she would return the compensatory land sites that she received from the authority.

"My husband, Siddaramaiah, the Chief Minister of the state, has upheld a strict code of ethics throughout his 40-year political career, remaining entirely free from any kind of blemish. I have lived my life committed to ensuring that nothing in my public or political life would cause him any embarrassment," she wrote in a letter.

This comes after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed a money laundering case against the Karnataka Chief Minister and others over the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land scam, taking cognisance of a recent state Lokayukta FIR, official sources said.

In the letter she said, "I wish to surrender 14 plots alloted to me in Vijayanagar 3rd and 4th phase in lieu of compensation for use of 3 acres 16 gunta land by the authorities without land acquisition in survey no. 464, Mysuru." Siddaramaiah, his wife B M Parvathi, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy and Devaraju, from whom Swamy had purchased land and gifted it to Parvathi -- and others have been named in the FIR registered by the Mysuru-located Lokayukta police establishment on 27 September.

The order of the special court judge came a day after High Court upheld the sanction granted by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to conduct an investigation.

The ED has pressed sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to book Siddaramaiah in ECIR. —*PTI*

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FIR was lodged after a special court last week ordered a Lokayukta probe against Siddaramaiah ***PHOTO: PTI***

MARKET INVESTORS LOSE ₹3.57L CR

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Investors' wealth got eroded by Rs 3.57 lakh crore on Monday as markets took a heavy beating with the BSE Sensex tumbling 1,272 points amid a host of negative triggers -- weak Japanese markets, rising geopolitical risks in the Middle East and selling in heavyweight bank stocks and Reliance Industries. The BSE benchmark Sensex tumbled 1,272.07 points or 1.49 per cent to settle at 84,299.78. During the day, it plunged 1,314.71 points or 1.53 per cent to 84,257.14. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms slumped by Rs 3,57,885.53 crore to Rs 4,74,35,137.15 crore (USD 5.66 trillion). The BSE midcap gauge declined 0.28 per cent, while smallcap index climbed 0.07 per cent. A total of 2,223 stocks declined, 1,819 advanced and 151 remained unchanged on the BSE. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 7

PM speaks to Netanyahu, says terrorism has no place

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday spoke with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu about the recent developments in West Asia and asserted that terrorism has no place in our world.

It is crucial to prevent regional escalation and ensure the safe release of all hostages, Modi said. "Spoke to Prime Minister @netanyahu about recent developments in West Asia. Terrorism has no place in our world. It is crucial to prevent regional escalation and ensure the safe release of hostages," Modi said.

US President Joe Biden called for a ceasefire on Monday when asked about reports that Israel is preparing for a limited ground invasion of Lebanon in its fight against Hezbollah .

"I'm more aware than you might know and I'm comfortable with them stopping. We should have a ceasefire now," Biden said. Meanwhile, US is sending an additional 'few thousand' troops to the Middle East to bolster security and to be prepared to defend Israel if necessary. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

'REPORT NOT CLEAR'

Keep Gods out of politics: SC on Tirupati laddu row

The next hearing is on 3 October

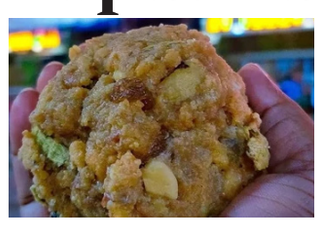


PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Observing that Gods should be kept away from politics, Supreme Court on Monday questioned Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's public statement that animal fat was allegedly used in making Tirupati laddus under the previous YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led regime.

The apex court said the laboratory test report was "not clear at all" and it prima facie indicated that 'rejected ghee' was subjected to test.

"You had ordered an investigation to SIT and till the outcome of such an investigation, what was the necessity to go to the press?" the bench observed, adding, "At least, we expect the Gods to be kept away from politics."

Observing that these pleas pertain to an issue which affects the sentiments of crores of people living in the world, the bench noted the chief minister had gone public in a statement that animal fat was being used under previous regime. While posting the matter for hearing on 3 October, the apex court asked the top law officer to ponder over the issue. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

SC pulls up WB over 'tardiness' in RG Kar case

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday expressed dissatisfaction over "tardy" progress by the West Bengal government in the installation of CCTVs and construction of toilets and separate resting rooms in government medical colleges, and directed the state to complete work by 15 October.

It was hearing a suo motu case related to the rape and murder of a postgraduate medic at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

The bench noted that no part of the work carried out by the state government was above 50 per cent.

Advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for the victim's parents, told the bench that the parents of the deceased are disconcerted by repeated clips in social media disclosing her name and photos.

Meanwhile, Calcutta High Court allowed a rally to be held in the metropolis by the Joint Platform of Doctors (JPD) on 1 October to protest the rape-murder of the trainee medic. —*PTI*

SC grants interim protection from arrest to actor Siddique

>>>More on Page 4

SC issues notice to Assam govt on 'bulldozer action'

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday sought the responses of the Assam government and others on a plea seeking initiation of contempt proceedings for the alleged violation of the apex court's order that had said there shall be no demolition of properties across the country without its permission.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan also asked the parties to maintain status quo in the matter.

The top court had, on 17 September, said there will be no demolition of properties, including of those accused of crimes, till 1 October, without its permission. —*PTI*

AFSPA extended in Manipur for 6 more months

IMPHAL, 30 SEPT

The government on Monday extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) by another six months in Manipur excluding 19 police station areas falling under the Imphal valley and a region that shares its boundary with Assam. In a notification, the state government's Home Department said the extension will come into effect from 1 October. The issue of declaration of Disturbed Area status is very sensitive and may likely attract public criticism and resistance if proper care is not taken, it said. The areas that have been kept out of the purview of AFSPA are dominated by the majority Meitei community. AFSPA gives sweeping powers to the armed forces operating in disturbed areas to search, arrest and open fire if they deem it necessary. —*PTI*

NEPAL DROWNS

Incessant rainfall over the weekend triggered floods and landslides that killed over 200 people in Nepal ***PHOTO: PTI>>>More on Page 6***

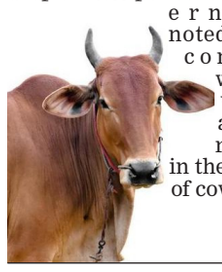
MAHARASHTRA DECLARES COWS AS 'RAJYA MATA'

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Maharashtra government on Monday declared desi (indigenous) cows as 'Rajyamata', citing the importance of cows in Indian culture, agriculture, and healthcare.

The decision was taken to ensure the conservation of desi cows, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said. Fadnavis said the state would also provide farmers feed for these cows.

The state cabinet, while highlighting the significance of desi cows since the Vedic period, also approved the Animal Husbandry Department's proposal to provide a Rs 50 daily subsidy per animal to cow shelter operators. The Maharashtra Cow Shelter Commissionerate will oversee the functioning of such shelters, an official release said. There are 46,13,632 desi cows in the state, according to the 2019 census, a drop of 20.69 per cent. The government noted that concerns were voiced about the rapid fall in the number of cows. —*PTI*



BMRCL drops 2 key Metro stations from Airport Line

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) announced the discontinuation of plans for Bettahalasur and Chikkajala stations on the Metro Blue Line, intended to connect Kempegowda International Airport. The cost for Chikkajala station is Rs 130 crore and Bettahalasur is Rs 140 crore.

BMRCL officials cited financial constraints as the primary reason for the decision, stating that cost-sharing agreements with state and central authorities do not apply to these stations. The state government was supposed to pay for Chikkajala station.

Previously, BMRCL had secured funding for the Bettahalasur station through private investment, with a real estate firm expressing interest in covering costs. An agreement was signed in July 2023, and the firm provided an initial token advance of Rs. 1 crore.

Speaking to **Salar News**, Nanditha V, an IT professional from Bettahalasur, said "I am really disappointed with this decision. The stations would have greatly improved access for people in our area, especially those commuting to the airport and towards the city for work. It feels like our voices aren't being heard, and we are losing out on essential —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Jadeja seventh Indian to take 300 Test wickets

KANPUR, 30 SEPT

Ravindra Jadeja on Monday became the seventh Indian to take 300 test wickets when he dismissed Khaled Mahmud in the second game against Bangladesh. Jadeja had Mahmud caught and bowled to bring an end to Bangladesh's first innings on day four. Jadeja also became the second quickest to complete the 3,000 runs in test behind England great Ian Botham. Bangladesh still trail by 26 runs. Ashwin did the damage with a two-wicket haul (2/14). Earlier, aggressive fifties by Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul placed India in a commanding position. Virat Kohli on Monday became only the fourth player in history to complete 27,000 runs in international cricket across formats. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 8

IDF strike kills Hamas' Lebanon chief, 2 others

TEL AVIV, 30 SEPT

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said its military security chief Mohammad Abd al-Aal, military commander Imad Odeh, and another member, Abdelrahman Abd al-Aal, were killed in the strike.

The IDF later confirmed carrying out the strike, killing the PFLP operatives including the commander of the terror group in Lebanon.

Speaking to troops on the northern border, Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said "the elimination of Nasrallah is a very important step, but it is not everything. "We will use all the capabilities we have. If someone on the other side did not understand what the capabilities mean, it is all capabilities, and you are part of this effort," he said to the troops.

Hezbollah's deputy leader vowed to continue fighting Israel and said the militant group was prepared for a long war. Israeli troops have entered Hezbollah tunnels dug near the border with Israel as part of small-scale forays into southern Lebanon. —*Agencies*

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HC STAYS PROBE AGAINST FM IN ELECTORAL BONDS CASE

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

High Court on Monday stayed investigation against Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and others over alleged irregularities concerning the now scrapped electoral bond scheme.

Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the interim order on a petition filed by BJP leader Nalin Kumar Kateel challenging the FIR in which he has been named as an accused.

The matter will be next heard on 22 October.

A case was registered on Saturday against Sitharaman and others on the directions of a special court here, following a complaint relating to the scheme.

BJP Karnataka chief B Y Vijayendra has also been named in the FIR —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

'IF I CAN, YOU CAN'

Actor Mithun to get Dadasaheb Phalke Award

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

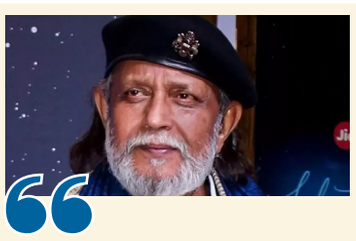
Veteran actor Mithun Chakraborty, star of films such as "Mrigayaa", "Surakshaa", "Disco Dancer", and "Dance Dance", was on Monday named recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the government's highest recognition in the field of cinema.

The announcement comes months after Chakraborty was awarded Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian honour, by the Government of India.

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw made the announcement on X.

"Mithun Da's remarkable cinematic journey inspires generations! Honoured to announce that the Dadasaheb Phalke Selection Jury has decided to award legendary actor, Sh. Mithun Chakraborty Ji for his iconic contribution to Indian Cinema," the minister said in the post.

"Congratulations to veteran Hindi film actor Mithun Chakraborty, who entertained cinephiles for many decades with his mesmerising performance and superb dance, deserves this honour.
-Siddaramaiah, Karnataka Chief Minister



I only wish to tell everyone that if I have reached this far, so can you
-Mithun Chakraborty, Veteran actor

The award will be presented to Chakraborty at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony on 8 October, 2024, Vaishnaw said.

Chakraborty, whose real name is Gourang Chakraborty, is an alumnus of Pune's Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) who has predominantly worked in Hindi and Bengali cinema.

He made his acting debut with Mrinal Sen's 1976 film "Mrigayaa", for which he won his first National Film Award for Best Actor. He earned two more National Awards for 1992's "Tahader Katha" (best actor) and 1998's "Swami Vivekananda" (best supporting actor). He was also praised for his role in the 1990 film "Agneepath", fronted by Amitabh Bachchan.

A former Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament, Chakraborty joined BJP ahead of the 2021 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election. —*PTI*

4 of family killed in bike-mini truck collision in Udupi

UDUPI, 30 SEPT

Four members of a family died when their two-wheeler allegedly crashed into a mini truck on Monday on the state highway at Pajegudde here on Monday, police said. According to police, the accident occurred as the family was proceeding from Karkala to Venur. A case was registered and investigation is on. *—PTI*

31 injured as KSRTC bus overturns near Mandya

MYSURU, 30 SEPT

Thirty one passengers sustained injuries when a KSRTC bus overturned near Sanjo Hospital on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway, close to Mandya on Monday. The incident occurred when the bus, travelling from Bengaluru towards Mandya, collided with a parked container truck at a service road crossing on the expressway, causing it to topple. Local residents, motorists, and passersby rushed to the scene and helped transport the injured to nearby Sanjo Hospital, with the assistance of the police. Those with more serious injuries were transferred to Mandya MIMS Hospital for further treatment. The Mandya Rural Police have registered a case, and an investigation into the incident is underway. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: ANI

BTP, BAF sign MoU to promote road safety in City

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) and the Bangalore Apartments' Federation (BAF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at improving road safety and addressing traffic congestion in Bengaluru on Monday. This partnership aims to tackle the City's escalating traffic congestion by sharing real-time traffic alerts and collaborating on initiatives to enhance the commuting experience. The MoU was signed by IPS, Joint Commissioner of Police, Traffic, Bengaluru City MN Anucheth, and President of BAF, Vikram Rai. The key highlight of the agreement is the exchange of real-time traffic alerts, which BTP will share with BAF. This will allow the federation to inform apartment residents of traffic conditions, enabling them to plan their commutes more efficiently. By accessing up-to-date traffic information, residents can avoid bottlenecks and make better decisions about their travel routes. Both BTP and BAF have committed to joint traffic management initiatives aimed at identifying and addressing congestion hotspots across the City. The MoU emphasises community engagement, with plans for regular workshops to educate about road safety. *—Salar News*

BEL inks pact with SAC-ISRO on defence and space

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

EDefence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) on Monday said it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO to collaborate, indigenise and develop infrastructure for manufacturing space-grade Travelling Wave Tube Amplifiers (TWTAs) in India. The BEL said that the MoU that was signed at SAC Ahmedabad will give a boost to the indigenisation of defence and space production and save foreign exchange for the country. "TWTA involves controlled interaction of microwave with electron beam under ultrahigh vacuum conditions. State-of-the-art fabrication and manufacturing facility for TWTAs has been established at BEL," PSU said. *—PTI*

SC lifts travel ban, allows Janardhana Reddy in Ballari

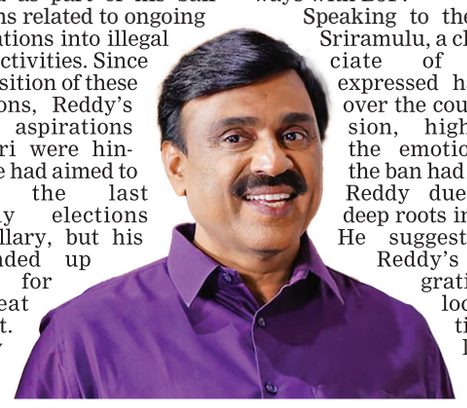
He was barred from visits for 14 yrs after his arrest in mining case

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

In a major relief for former Minister and Gangavati MLA Janardhana Reddy, the Supreme Court has lifted the 14-year-old travel restriction that had prevented him from entering Ballari and nearby areas of Andhra Pradesh. Reddy had been barred from these regions since his arrest in connection with the illegal mining case involving the Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC).

Previously, Reddy was required to seek court permission each time he wished to visit Ballari, complicating his access to a constituency to which he has deep emotional ties. The Supreme Court's decision now allows him unrestricted entry, a welcome change for Reddy, who had expressed frustration over the constraints imposed on him.

The restrictions were initially placed as part of his bail conditions related to ongoing investigations into illegal mining activities. Since the imposition of these restrictions, Reddy's political aspirations in Ballari were hindered. He had aimed to contest the last Assembly elections from Bellary, but his wife ended up running for the seat and lost. Reddy successfully contested from the Gangavati constituency as a candidate from the Kalyana Rajya Pragati Paksha (KRPP), a party he founded after parting ways with BJP.



Speaking to the media, Sriramulu, a close associate of Reddy, expressed happiness over the court's decision, highlighting the emotional toll the ban had taken on Reddy due to his deep roots in Ballari. He suggested that Reddy's reintegration into local politics could lead to new opportunities, possibly with an invitation from BJP to rejoin their ranks.

Reddy, whose net worth is reported to be around Rs 3,700 crore, founded the Kalyana Rajya Pragati Party during the Assembly elections and was the only candidate from his party to achieve electoral success. Following his victory, he reaffirmed his commitment to supporting BJP during the Lok Sabha elections, signalling his ongoing engagement in the political arena.

With the Supreme Court's lifting of travel restrictions, the future of Janardhana Reddy's political activities in Ballari remains to be seen, but it undoubtedly opens new avenues for his involvement in local politics. *—Salar News*

SIGH OF RELIEF

HC stays probe against Nirmala in electoral bonds case

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

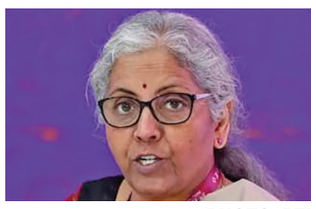


PHOTO: PTI

High Court on Monday stayed investigation against Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and others over alleged irregularities concerning the now scrapped electoral bond scheme.

Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the interim order on a petition filed by BJP leader Nalin Kumar Kateel challenging the FIR in which he has been named as an accused.

The matter will be next heard on 22 October.

A case was registered on Saturday against Sitharaman and others on the directions of a special court here, following a complaint relating to the scheme.

BJP Karnataka chief BY Vijayendra has also been named in the FIR.

The complaint was lodged by Adarsh R Iyer, Co-President of 'Janaadhikaara Sangharsha Parishath' (JSP), who alleged that the accused "committed extortion under the guise and garb of electoral bonds and benefitted to the tune of 8,000 and more crore of rupees." "The extortion racket under the garb of electoral bonds has been orchestrated hand in glove with BJP officials at various levels," he alleged. *—PTI*

HDK should prioritise on jobs, not petty politics: DKS

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday urged Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy to focus on creating jobs in the State rather than "spending all his time and energy on politicking."

Responding to Kumaraswamy's allegation that "information is getting leaked at the official level", Shivakumar said that he "should make use of his portfolio rather than indulging in politics."

"Kumaraswamy must focus on creating 50,000 to one lakh jobs in the state rather than doing politics. Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi has given him a good portfolio of Steel and Heavy Industries, he should make use of it to create jobs rather than giving unnecessary statements," Shivakumar, also the State Congress chief, told reporters.

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan, leader BK Hariprasad, Minister HK Patil, DyCM DK Shivakumar, leaders RV Deshpande, HM Revanna, Rajeev Gowda during a meeting on Gandhi Jayanthi, at the party office in Bengaluru on Monday

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Shivakumar also addressed BJP MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal's allegations that a "great leader" of his party has set aside Rs 1,000 crore had been earmarked to destabilise Congress government and become Chief Minister. He said legal options would be explored in the wake the incident. He said the matter had been brought to the attention of High Command and would be discussed with legal counsel. *—Salar News*

Didn't betray CM: MUDA head

MYSURU, 30 SEPT

MUDA Chairman **K Marigowda** who was facing ire from the supporters of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday clarified that he did not commit any wrong doing over MUDA irregularities, even he did not betray the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. He said his family members not responsible for his current troubles.

Speaking to reporters at his office in Mysuru, he said "I am hurt the way how Siddaramaiah was mobbed, sent back from Mysuru airport when he came to receive Siddaramaiah on Friday.

He informed that Siddaramaiah also told him that irregularities in MUDA did not occur during his period. He said that there is no question of submitting resignation, but he is ready to quit his post if Siddaramaiah asks for it.

He accused that previous MUDA Commissioners DB Natesh and Dinesh were responsible for all MUDA irregularities in distribution of alternative sites under 50: 50 schemes. Marigowda said he and other MUDA members MLAs K Harishgowda, TS Srivatsa ordered Dinesh not to distribute the lands but Dinesh went ahead an distributed sites under 50: 50 schemes for 8 acres of land. *—Salar News*

The MUDA matter is in the Court now. The Court has given its directions. Let us see the next development."

-HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister

BJP MLC DEMANDS SUO MOTU ACTION AGAINST CM

MYSURU, 30 SEPT

Former Minister and BJP MLC H Vishwanath on Monday urged the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to file a suo motU case against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in connection with the irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam.

He called on the State government to hand over MUDA-related scandals to CBI for investigation. He expressed concern that Siddaramaiah with whom he had started his political career, is now facing legal disputes and a Lokayukta inquiry. He expressed doubt that people would receive justice. *—Salar News*

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

KK Educational and Charitable Trust Chairman K Rehman Khan receives lifetime achievement award in education and social impact from actor Sonu Sood during ET Achiever's award function in Bengaluru PHOTO: SALAR

City orphanage flooded as pleas go in vain

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Twenty days after multiple complaints were raised about the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) rerouting a large stormwater drain (SWD) into a smaller underground drainage (UGD) pipe, and the illegal dumping of construction waste by the Puravankara Group and Whitefield Ventures—owned by the energy minister—havoc ensued in Pattandur Agrahara village, particularly in the lake buffer zone. The situation escalated on Sunday at midnight when the Abhayadhama Orphanage was flooded. The flooding led to knee-deep water accumulation in the orphanage, affecting the children and staff.

Despite complaints filed with the Revenue Department, BBMP, and BESCOM regarding these environmental violations, no preventive action was taken. The issue gained widespread attention after citizens of the Whitefield ward shared the incident on X, shedding light on the negligence that led to this disaster.

The issue gained widespread attention after citizens of the Whitefield ward shared the incident on X PHOTO: SALAR

According to Whitefield Ventures, the property in question, located in Survey Nos. 50 and 51/1 of Whitefield and measuring 10 acres and 6 guntas, has been under their ownership for the past 20 years. They explained that the landfill currently being carried out on their land is a necessary measure to address the illegal discharge of sewage water by neighbouring residents. Despite multiple complaints the issue remained unresolved, preventing further development on their land. The company stated that the landfill activity was being conducted in full compliance with regulations and with a sense of civic responsibility, clarifying that it had no connection with the lake or its buffer zone, as alleged by some groups. *—Salar News*

Doctor dies under mysterious circumstances

MYSURU, 30 SEPT

Gynaecologist S Vidyadhare ,42, working at Cheluvamba hospital, Mysuru was found dead at her apartment under mysterious circumstances on Monday. Her parents and relatives have accused her husband as the cause of death. The couple, who have three daughters, had differences for a few months. The incident came to light on Sunday when her Husband Dr Shanmukha, who was also chief medical officer of KR Hospital, went to check on her on Sunday. Forensic and fingerprint experts were pressed into service. As deceased women family members suspected foul play, investigation is underway. *—Salar News*

FOR 10 YEARS

Pak citizen held with family for illegal stay near B'luru

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

The Intelligence Bureau (IB) sleuths, in coordination with City police, arrested two Pakistani nationals and two Bangladeshi nationals near Electronics City in the Jigani police station limits on Monday.

According to sources, one of the Pakistani nationals had been residing illegally in an apartment with his wife, a Bangladeshi national, and their two children. The operation was conducted based on information provided by a United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) militant held by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The Pakistani man reportedly left his country following a religious controversy, fleeing to Bangladesh where he met his wife. They married in Dhaka and entered India illegally in 2014. The family moved to Bengaluru in 2016.

PHOTO: PTI

Acting on a tip-off related to ULFA militant Girish Bora, an NIA team from Assam carried out the raid.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Home Minister G. Parameshwara stated, "According to the information available, they have been living in India for 10 years. They have been taken into custody and will be interrogated to understand why they came to Bengaluru and how they obtained documents."

He further questioned, "If it is true that they have been staying in India for 10 years, why weren't they tracked by intelligence agencies and other authorities? Despite the scrutiny involved in passport issuance, they almost managed to get them. They even obtained Aadhaar cards and changed their names. They were running a restaurant here. Further investigation is required."

Parameshwara emphasized the ongoing issue of illegal immigrants, saying, "We have continuously raised the issue of illegal immigrants with the Centre. Based on the information available, there are many illegal immigrants living in Bengaluru.

We are monitoring and screening them daily. Those found will be arrested and deported. Information will be shared with the Bangladesh High Commission and the Government of India. The Centre needs to strengthen security at the borders," he added. *—Salar News*

21 SCHOOL DRIVERS BOOKED FOR DRUNK DRIVING

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Bengaluru traffic police conducted a special drive targeting school vehicles on Monday, inspecting 3,924 vehicles from 7:30am to 12pm. 21 drivers found under the influence of alcohol, were booked for driving under the influence (DUI). Additionally, 445 vehicles were penalised for carrying excess school children.

"The vehicles in which the driver was found driving under influence of alcohol have been seized and the permit of such vehicles has been recommended to be cancelled by concerned RTOS." a police announcement stated. Earlier on the same day, East Traffic Division conducted another operation from 7am to 9.30am, where 1,204 vehicles were inspected. 8 cases were registered against drivers operating under the influence of alcohol, and 100 against those exceeding the allowed number of children in school vehicles, resulting in a total fine of Rs 20,000. *—Salar News*

Ola asked to pay ₹5L in sexual harassment case

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

High Court on Monday directed ANI Technologies, the parent company of Ola Cabs, to compensate a woman with Rs five lakh after she allegedly faced sexual harassment by one of their drivers during a trip in 2019.

Justice MGS Kamal, presiding over a single-judge bench, also instructed OLA's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to initiate a proper inquiry in line with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).

The inquiry is to be concluded within 90 days, and a report must be submitted to the District Officer.

Additionally, ANI Technologies has been ordered to pay Rs 50,000 to cover the petitioner's litigation expenses.

The Court has further directed the Karnataka State Road Safety Authority to expedite its proceedings regarding the notice issued to ANI Technologies, with a deadline of 90 days for completion. The state government has been ordered to pay a penalty of Rs one lakh for failing to respond adequately to the petition.

During the proceedings, the petitioner's counsel argued that OLA functions as a transport company, not merely a platform, and should bear responsibility for its drivers' actions. The counsel for OLA, however, contended that the drivers are independent contractors, and not employees, and the company should not be held liable under labour laws. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

YouTuber held for defaming ex-Army chief VK Singh

GHAZIABAD, 30 SEPT

The owner of a YouTube-based news portal has been arrested here for allegedly putting out defamatory content against former Army chief and former Union minister VK Singh, police said on Monday. The arrest was made by the officials of Kavinagar police station following the registration of a complaint made by Singh, the former Ghaziabad Lok Sabha MP, on Sunday evening, a senior officer said. Those booked in the case are the news portal's editor-in-chief Ran Singh and a city-based iron trader, Anand Prakash, who allegedly made the false claim about Singh, the officer said. The YouTube channel allegedly posted unverified claims, saying that Singh failed to pay rent for his residence during his occupancy. In his complaint, Singh described the post as "baseless" and lacking factual evidence. ***—PTI***

Make people sip cow urine before garba: BJP leader

INDORE, 30 SEPT

A BJP functionary from Indore district on Monday urged organisers to make people sip "gaumutra" (cow urine) before letting them in garba pandals during Navratri festival as a Hindu can never refuse this precondition. Proposing "aachman", BJP district president Chintu Verma told reporters that the aachman practice has great significance in Sanatan culture. According to Hindu customs, aachaman means taking a sip of water while reciting mantras for purification before starting religious rituals. Queried about the rationale behind this demand, Verma said sometimes some people join these events which generate certain discussions. ***—PTI***

Muslim population rising, will oust BJP in UP: SP MLA

BIJNOR, 30 SEPT

Former State minister and Samajwadi Party MLA Mehboob Ali has said that the growing Muslim population would lead to the BJP's exit from power in Uttar Pradesh in the 2027 Assembly polls. The 72-year-old sixth-term MLA from Amroha made the remarks during a party event here on Sunday, with video clips of his speech circulating on social media. Speaking at the programme, Ali emphasised that the demographic shift would favour the SP, saying, Drawing a parallel between the BJP and the Mughal empire, he said, "If the Mughals, who ruled for over 800 years are no longer around, what makes you think the BJP will last?" ***—PTI***

Tytler moves HC over anti-Sikh riots charges

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Congress leader Jagdish Tytler has moved the Delhi High Court challenging a recent trial court order that framed charges against him for murder and other offences related to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. The charges against Tytler include unlawful assembly, rioting, and promoting enmity. Tytler, pleaded not guilty to these charges. The plea filed on behalf of the petitioner, Tytler, submitted that the Impugned Order is perverse, illegal and lacks application of mind. The bench of Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri is scheduled to hear the matter on Tuesday. On 20 May, 2023, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed a charge sheet against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler accusing him of inciting, instigating, and provoking a mob assembled at Pul Bangash Gurudwara, Azad Market, on 1 November, 1984. ***—ANI***

I pray you live till 125: Rajnath's dig at Kharge

Cong hits back saying BJP should focus on serious issues such as Manipur & caste census

CHANDIGARH, 30 SEPT

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday took a jibe at Mallikarjun Kharge's remarks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he prays that the Congress President lives till 125 years as Modi will continue to remain the PM for a long time.

At an election rally in Jammu on Sunday, Kharge felt dizzy but resumed his speech after a brief pause, saying he won't die before Modi is removed from power.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah described Kharge's remarks as "absolutely distasteful and disgraceful".

Shah said Kharge's remarks showed how much "hate and fear" the Congress people have of Modi that they are thinking of him "constantly".

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Nirmala said the Congress leadership never loses any opportunity to display their hate towards Modi.

BJP national spokesperson Syed Shahnawaz Hussain hit out at Kharge for his remarks and said Modi has become prime minister for the third consecutive term with the blessings of the people of the country.

Meanwhile, Congress hit back at BJP over their attack on

Cong Prez Mallikarjun Kharge & Defence Minister Rajnath Singh ***PHOTO: PTI***

Kharge, saying he should focus on serious issues, such as the situation in Manipur and a caste census.

In a post in Hindi on X, Kharge said, "Home Minister Amit Shah should focus on serious issues like Manipur, census and caste census." "Your government's own survey says 92 per cent of the employees cleaning urban sewers and septic tanks come from SC, ST, OBC categories," the Congress chief said. "BJP is against a caste census because then it will be known that through what kind of work SC, ST, OBC, EWS and all other categories are earning their livelihood. What is their economic and social status. What kind of targeted benefits of government schemes should they get," Kharge said.

He asserted that the Congress is firmly committed to getting a nationwide caste census conducted. "We will get it done," he added. Kharge tagged the screenshot of a report in "The Hindu", which said in a first-of-its-kind attempt to enumerate people engaged in the hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks in India's cities and towns, government data gathered from more than 3,000 urban local bodies in 29 states and Union territories shows that 91.9 per cent of the 38,000 workers profiled so far belong to Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) or Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities. Congress General secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "In his election speech, Kharge said 'I am not going to retire till I see the exit of the prime minister', which is a perfect political statement to make. The non-biological prime minister and this self-declared Chanakya (Shah) have made disgraceful statements and they are now accusing Kharge." ***—PTI***

Anwar seeks HC probe against Kerala govt

MALAPPURAM, 30 SEPT

Dissident LDF MLA PV Anvar has launched a fresh attack on Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the ruling CPI(M) while seeking a High Court-monitored probe into his allegations on various issues, including those against a top state police official.

During an "explanatory meet" at Nilambur on Sunday, Anvar trained his guns on Vijayan, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) MR Ajithkumar, and a CPI(M) district secretary, alleging that he was kicked out of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) for demanding action against Ajithkumar.

Anvar had earlier challenged Vijayan to order a reinvestigation into around 180 gold smuggling cases, alleging that the police were not following procedure while seizing the precious metal illegally brought from abroad.

The Nilambur MLA convened the meeting after the CPI(M) recently said it severed ties with him and alleged that he had become a "political axe of the right wing".

Anvar said he was being branded communal for asking the party to introspect its failures.

He also said a decision on his future -- either joining a political party or floating a new one -- would be taken after surveying the people.

Highlighting former health minister KK Shailja's

CPM MLA P V Anvar ***PHOTO: FACEBOOK/@PVANVAR***

- He also criticised the LDF government for its stand on the 2018 Sabarimala issue, which stemmed from a Supreme Court verdict allowing women of all ages to enter the shrine.

defeat in the Lok Sabha elections from the Vatakara seat, the lawmaker claimed the CPI(M) had failed to address its shortcomings in the parliamentary polls.

He also criticised the LDF government for its stand on the 2018 Sabarimala issue, which stemmed from a Supreme Court verdict allowing women of all ages to enter the shrine.

Anvar also alleged Vijayan was threatening him with a letter from the Governor in a phone tapping matter.

A case was registered against Anvar on Sunday for allegedly illegally tapping phone calls of senior state police officials. ***—PTI***

HARYANA BATTLE INTENSIFIES

Rahul targets BJP; Cong fires 10 leaders

Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi, Kumari Selja and Rahul Gandhi during a rally at Naraingarh in Ambala, Haryana, on Monday

CHANDIGARH, 30 SEPT

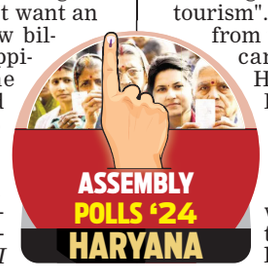
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created a Mahabharat-like 'chakravyuh' to snatch money from the poor and give it to a few billionaires.

Meanwhile, Congress expelled 10 leaders for alleged anti-party activities for six years ahead of Rahul's 'Haryana Vijay Sankalp Yatra'. Rahul campaigned in Naraingarh, Ambala and Kurukshetra. At a rally in the evening at Thanesar in Kurukshetra, also known as the land of the Mahabharat, Gandhi used the 'chakravyuh' analogy to hit out at BJP.

"BJP's aim is to take out money from the common people's pockets and give it to a few billionaires. Like the 'chakravyuh' in

> **The Constitution has given you rights. You change those who speak about changing the Constitution**
> —Priyanka Gandhi, Congress leader

Mahabharat, a similar 'chakravyuh' has been created and six people are behind it -- Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Adani, Ambani, Doval and Mohan Bhagwat," Gandhi alleged. He said, "We don't want an India where a few billionaires live happily and the farmers and labourers remain hungry. To change this, we have to break this Amit Shah-Modi 'chakravyuh'". ***—PTI***



In a united show, CM denies infighting

Nayab Singh Saini, who took over as the Chief Minister in March and is now contesting the polls from Ladwa ***PHOTOS: PTI***

NARNAUL, 30 SEPT

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini asserted that there is no infighting in BJP and his party will form government for a third consecutive time as there are no takers for Congress' "jhooth ki dukan".

He also attacked Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi ahead of the second leg of the Congress leader's "Haryana Sankalp Yatra", terming it as "political tourism". "No senior leader from the Congress was campaigning in Haryana and now Rahul is venturing on political tourism. He is welcome to see the development we have done in the state in the last 10 years. ," Saini said.

On reports of infighting in the BJP with two senior leaders -- Rao Inderjit Singh and Anil Vij -- staking claim for the top post, Saini, who has been fielded as the chief minister face by BJP, said the party is united.

Former Cabinet minister Ram Bilas Sharma, who is credited with establishing the BJP in Haryana, says he holds no grudges against anybody for being denied a ticket for the assembly polls and will continue to serve the party. The five-time MLA from Mahendragarh had filed his nomination for the poll as BJP delayed the announcement of its nominee till the eleventh hour. But the party convinced him to back out in support of official candidate Kanvar Singh. ***—PTI***

SEEKS DELHI'S REPLY

SC stays proceedings against Atishi and Kejriwal in defamation case

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Supreme Court on Monday sought response from the Delhi government and BJP leader Rajiv Babbar on a plea of Delhi Chief Minister Atishi and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal challenging the High Court order refusing to quash a defamation case against them.

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti issued a notice in the matter and stayed the proceedings in the trial court.

Both Atishi and Kejriwal has challenged the 2 September order of the Delhi High Court, which had refused to quash the proceedings against them and other AAP leaders over their remarks about alleged deletion of names of voters, saying the imputations prima facie lowered the reputation of the BJP.

PHOTO: PTI

It had dismissed the plea by Atishi, Kejriwal and two others -- AAP former Rajya Sabha member Sushil Kumar Gupta and party leader Manoj Kumar -- challenging the defamation proceedings pending before the trial court. PTI

Similarly, Atishi on Monday moved a sessions court against an order summoning her in a defamation case filed by a BJP leader Praveen Shankar Kapoor over her claim that several AAP MLAs were approached by the saffron party with offers of cash to bring down the AAP government.

The sessions court directed Kapoor to file his response to Atishi's application by 7 October, when the court will hear the arguments in the matter.

Meanwhile, AAP sought an urgent meeting with Lt Governor VK Saxena to discuss the steep rise in gang-related extortion cases and alleged deteriorating law and order situation in the national capital. AAP MLAs, in a letter to the LG, said that they are concerned by the recent surge in gang-related violence and extortion in Delhi. ***—PTI***

Annamalai flays DMK over Stalin's son's rise as DyCM

CHENNAI, 30 SEPT

In a veiled attack targeting the ruling DMK over the elevation of Udhayanidhi Stalin as Deputy Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai has alleged that the 'sun shines for the privileged few.' In a post on 'X', Annamalai said: "The Sun shines for the privileged few & an eclipse for the rest of the State for the last 40 months. People have now understood what the term "Vidiyal" actually meant: Vidiyal for self, family, and the chieftains." The Tamil word 'Vidiyal' denotes 'dawn' and it formed part of DMK's campaign ahead of the 2021 Assembly polls. Further, a meme posted by the BJP leader blamed the ruling party for 'rising nepotism' and it had photographs of leaders including Udhayanidhi, who belong to prominent political families of the DMK. ***—PTI***

TDP stands by SC's laddu remark, YSRCP cries foul

AMARAVATI, 30 SEPT

With Supreme Court (SC) raising a number of questions to the party-led government in Andhra Pradesh over the Tirupati lad-du controversy, the ruling TDP on Monday said it stands by what was said on the issue and that it was also ready for a 'cen-tral' probe although state police' SIT was probing the matter.

Opposition YSRCP used the SC's remarks to attack its rival, saying the 'heinous' publicity made over the laddu prasadam issue has hurt the entire world.

TDP leaders insisted that adulterated ghee was used in making the famous Tirupati laddus, as alleged by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu recently.

TDP Spokesperson Pattabhi Ram Kommareddy said "we stand by whatever we have placed before the public."

Asked about the possibility of a central agency's probe in the matter, he said "We don't have any problem."

"If SC says that Central agencies also should be involve in this, we are more than happy," he said.

The Opposition YSRCP targeted the government over the matter.

"The heinous publicity made over the laddu prasadam issue has intensely hurt the entire world. A fearsome atmosphere was created and the Hindu community was subjected to violence," party leader B Karunakar Reddy said.

Reddy is a two-time chairman of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), the official custodian of Sri Venkateswara temple in Tirupati, a super-rich Hindu shrine in southern Andhra Pradesh. According to Reddy, the TDP-led state government resorted to massive injustice by dragging God into politics, despite impassioned appeals to not to do so. ***—PTI***

EC allows J&K exit polls after 6pm on 5 October

JAMMU, 30 SEPT

With the third and final phase of polling for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly election scheduled for Tuesday, authorities have said exit poll predictions could be aired only after 6pm on 5 October.

According to the guidelines issued by the Election Commission (EC) on 31 August and under the provisions of section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, all media outlets, polling agencies and individuals are informed that publication or broadcast of exit poll results related to the Jammu and Kashmir election may be done after 6 m on October 5, the office of the chief electoral officer (CEO) said in a statement on Monday.

It said violations of the guidelines may lead to legal action, including fines and imprisonment.

"The restriction applies to all forms of media, including newspapers, television channels, radio, online news portals, social media platforms and messaging services like WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram etc. It also applies to political parties, candidates, polling agencies and any individuals engaged in election-related activities," the statement said.

The statement said the measure aims at maintaining the integrity of the electoral process and ensure a free and fair election environment, and to ensure that voters make their decisions uninfluenced by premature predictions or analysis of electoral outcomes.

All concerned parties, including media houses, social media platforms and polling agencies, are urged to adhere to these instructions and refrain from publishing or sharing any exit poll results before the stipulated time, it said.

The votes polled in the election will be counted on 8 October. ***—PTI***

EYES ON POLLS

M'rashtra raises death gratuity to Rs 20L

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Maharashtra government, led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Monday announced several key decisions, including raising the limit of and retirement gratuity to Rs 20 lakh and creation of 4,860 special teacher posts in the state. These decisions were taken at a Cabinet meeting here today.

In the meeting, state approved a 10 per cent salary increase for Kotwals, and a compassionate policy.

The state government has granted approval for interest-free secondary loan assistance to the MMRDA. The state government also announced a subsidy scheme for rearing indigenous cows was.

The state government has also approved concessions on the payment of land premiums to the MMRDA.

The state government has

NCP leader Ajit Pawar, DyCM Devendra Fadnavis and CM Eknath Shinde after cabinet meeting, in Mumbai, on Monday ***PHOTO: PTI***

also decided to expedite housing schemes for the poor, along with an affordable rental housing scheme for ineligible slum dwellers in Dharavi.

It also approved the utilisation of 255 acres of salt pan land in Mumbai to develop houses for slum rehabilitation project-hit people, assigning the implementation responsibility to Adani group's Dharavi Slum Redevelopment Project.

The state government has also decided to increase the financial criteria for the Krishi Swavalamban Yojana targeting Scheduled Caste and Neo-Buddhist farmers.

Approval was given for the construction of the Hasala, Umbadga, Peth, and Kava Kolhapur Dams in Latur District. ***—PTI***

Gadkari throws shade at Ladki Bahin

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said Maharashtra's Ladki Bahin scheme, introduced to provide financial assistance to women, could affect the timely payment of subsidies in other sectors. Latching onto his comments, NCP (SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) said if those in the government were saying the state's economy is in distress, then it is a matter of concern.

SC gives Siddique interim relief from arrest

SC sends notice to Kerala and victim over anticipatory bail in the rape case following Hema panel report

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday granted interim protection from arrest to Malayalam film actor Siddique in a rape case.

A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma issued notice to the Kerala government and the victim in the case during the hearing of a plea by Siddique challenging a Kerala High Court order which denied him anticipatory bail.

At the outset, the court asked advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for the victim, about the reason for the delay in registering the complaint against the actor.

The lawyer told the bench that the Justice Hema Committee report, which exposed the harassment and sexual exploitation faced by women in the Malayalam film industry, has to be understood in the larger context.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Siddique, submitted that a complaint was lodged in 2024 after a lapse of eight years.

On 24 September, High Court had rejected the anticipatory bail plea of Siddique in the rape case, saying that in view of the seriousness of the accusations, his custodial interrogation was inevitable for proper investigation of the crime.

PHOTO: PTI

Siddique PHOTO: PTI

KERALA'S ME TOO

'Forced to watch sexual act'

Malayalam actor Minu Muneer claimed that filmmaker-actor Balachandra Menon forced her to watch a sexual act with others in 2007. Earlier, Minu had accused seven men, including actor Jayasurya, of physical and verbal abuse. Following her allegations, a FIR was filed against the

Cinema makeup artist booked for sexual assault

Police have registered a sexual assault case against a noted makeup artist in the film industry based on a complaint lodged by a woman in Kottayam. Makeup artist Saji Koratty was booked based on a statement given by a woman professional before the government appointed Justice K Hema Committee. After the government formed a SIT to investigate allegations from the committee report, the woman approached the police and gave a statement. It was later forwarded to Ponkunnam police here as the alleged crime had occurred in the district years ago. —PTI

SC miffed over PIL seeking in-house inquiry against ex-CJI Ranjan Gogoi

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday took strong note of former CJI Ranjan Gogoi being made a party to a PIL and seeking of an in-house inquiry against him for dismissing a plea earlier related to a service dispute.

"How can you file a PIL with a judge as a respondent? There has to be some dignity. You cannot just say I want an in-house inquiry against a judge. Justice Gogoi was a former judge of Supreme Court," a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud told a Pune-based litigant.

"He retired as the Chief Justice of India. You cannot say I want an in-house inquiry against a judge because you did not succeed before the bench. Sorry, we cannot tolerate this", the bench said.

The litigant filed a PIL after his plea relating to his termination of services under labour laws was earlier dismissed by a bench headed by Justice Gogoi, since retired. —PTI

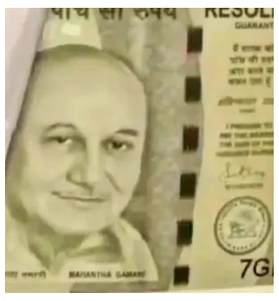
Ranjan Gogoi PHOTO: PTI

- "He retired as the Chief Justice of India. You cannot say I want an in-house inquiry against a judge because you did not succeed before the bench. Sorry, we cannot tolerate this", the bench said.

SC is not coffee shop, don't say ya ya: CJI

Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud criticised a litigant for using the informal term "ya" instead of yes to address the bench. "What is this 'ya-ya'. This is not the coffee shop. I am very allergic to this 'ya ya'. This cannot be allowed," the CJI said. This is not the first time he has taken exception to tone of lawyers and reminded them of etiquettes.

ANUPAM REPLACES GANDHI ON NOTES



A trader was duped of 2.1 kg of gold after conmen handed over fake notes worth Rs 1.6 crore featuring actor Anupam Kher's face in Ahmedabad. PHOTO: X

17 fishermen held by SL Navy for illegal fishing

COLOMBO, 30 SEPT

The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 17 Indian fishermen and seized their trawlers for allegedly poaching in its territorial waters in Mannar, taking the number of Indian nationals apprehended this year by the island nation in such incidents to 413, an official statement said. The navy conducted the "special operation" leading to the apprehension of the Indian fishermen, it said. The 17 apprehended fishermen were escorted to the Talaimannar Pier and will be handed over to the Mannar Fisheries Inspector for further action, it said. The Sri Lankan Navy has "held 55 Indian fishing boats and 413 Indian fishermen in island waters thus far in 2024 and handed them over to authorities for legal action," the statement said. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lankan territorial waters. —PTI

26 cybercriminals arrested in pan India crackdown

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

In a multi-state crackdown on organised cybercrime, the CBI has arrested 26 alleged cybercriminals involved in fraudulent activities targeting people globally, officials said on Monday. The action under operation Chakra-III started with raids at 32 different places across Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Visakhapatnam late night last Thursday. The central agency has seized Rs 58.45 lakh cash, locker keys and three luxury vehicles, they said. Four call centres—VC Inconformities Pvt. Ltd at Regent Plaza, Pune; VC Infrometrix Pvt. Ltd, Murli Nagar, Visakhapatnam; Viajex Solutions, Hyderabad; and Atriya Global Services Pvt. Ltd, Visakhapatnam -- were among the places raided by the agency. So far, the CBI has arrested 10 cybercriminals from Pune, five from Hyderabad and 11 from Visakhapatnam. —PTI

MP recognises heatwave as a natural disaster

BHOPAL, 30 SEPT

In a significant decision, Madhya Pradesh government has included heatwaves in its list of natural disasters.

This means that individuals who suffer fatalities due to heatwaves will now receive compensation similar to that provided for other natural calamities.

Following directives from the central Ministry of Home Affairs, the state government has officially notified heatwaves as a local disaster under the Madhya Pradesh Disaster Management Act of 2005. The new regulation is set to take effect in the summer of 2025.

As a result, individuals affected by heatwaves will be eligible for the same financial assistance that is currently available for those impacted by floods, earthquakes, and lightning strikes. Pradesh government said in an official statement.

Notably, a number of deaths were reported from the Northern India during the summers, as temperature rose significantly. The heatwave in large parts of the country claimed 114 lives and more than 40,000 suspected heatstroke cases were reported between 1 March and 19 June this year, according to sources from the Union Health Ministry. The maximum number of deaths due to heatstroke, till 19 June, 2024, were reported from Uttar Pradesh, 37, Bihar, 17, Rajasthan, 16, and Odisha, 13. Heatwaves are intense periods of excessively high temperatures, often accompanied by high humidity. They occur from April to June and can lead to serious health risks, including heatstroke and dehydration. The impact is especially severe in northern and central regions, where temperatures can exceed 45°C. —PTI

PROTEST IN HIMACHAL

Mosque row: Hindu grps scuffle with cops in Kullu

SHIMLA, 30 SEPT

As protests demanding the demolition of illegally constructed mosques rage on in Himachal Pradesh, a Muslim organisation said that there were no illegal mosques in the state but delay in approval of maps in government records was causing a problem.

Hindu outfits that took out a yatra in Kullu demanding the demolition of the mosque were involved in a scuffle with police on Monday.

Protesters of the 'Hindu Dharam Jagaran Yatra' marched from Hanuman temple to Akhara Mosque amid tight security.

People in large numbers, women included, carrying saffron flags and placards called for the demolition of the mosque in Kullu. Musicians local instruments and women in traditional dress led the yatra.

The demand for the demolition of illegally constructed mosques began after a scuffle between a Muslim barber and a Hindu businessman in Malyana area in the suburbs of Shimla on 30 August turned into a communal issue. Hindu groups have been demanding the demolition of mosques they say are unauthorised, while residents at large are demanding that outsiders coming into the state be identified. Meanwhile, Muslim Welfare Committee, Mandi pPesident Naheem Ahmed told the PTI on Monday: "No mosque in Himachal Pradesh is illegal but there had been a delay in getting the maps approved and other related processes. We would ourselves remove the structures if found illegal." —PTI

Members of Hindu organisations stage a protest over the Sanjauli mosque row, in Kullu, on Monday PHOTO: ANI

COURT ACQUITS 10 OVER LACK OF PROOF IN UP RIOTS

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 30 SEPT

A court here has acquitted 10 people accused of killing a man during the communal riots in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli in 2013 due to lack of evidence.

Additional District Sessions Judge Anjani Kumar Singh acquitted Gaurav, Amarpal, Rocky, Ratan, Dinesh, Yogesh, Abhishek, Roobi, Kapil Kumar and Manoj Kumar, saying prosecution has failed to prove its story. The order was passed on 26 September and made available two days later. Complainant Imrana had lodged an FIR with the local police and alleged that her husband Ashu was beaten to death by rioters when they were going to a bus stand on a scooter during riots at Phugana village in the district on 8 August, 2013. According to the prosecution, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had filed a charge sheet against 11 people and one Sachin died during pendency of case.—PTI

Kangana agrees to cuts suggested in 'Emergency'

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Central Board of Film Certification told Bombay High Court on Monday that actor-producer Kangana Ranaut has agreed to the cuts suggested by the CBFC in her movie 'Emergency'.

A division bench of Justices BP Colabawalla and Firdosh Pooniwalla was hearing a petition filed by the film's co-producer Zee Entertainment Enterprises, seeking a direction to the CBFC to issue a certificate for the film, helmed by Ranaut. The movie, which was initially slated for a 6 September release, has been embroiled in a battle with the censor board for non-issuance of certificate for its release.

Ranaut, who has directed and co-produced the film besides playing the lead role of former prime minister late Indira Gandhi, had accused the CBFC of stalling certification to delay the release.'

It is caught up in row after Sikh organisations objected, accusing it of misrepresenting the community and getting historical facts wrong. During the hearing on Monday, advocate Sharan Jagtiani, representing Zee Entertainment, told the court that Ranaut has informed them about the revised changes that they (CBFC) wanted to make. The court adjourned the matter till 3 October and asked both the parties to seek proper instructions. Zee Entertainment in its plea claimed the CBFC had already made the certificate for the movie but was not issuing it. —PTI

PHOTO: PTI

Man held for rape after girl tells mom about 'bad touch'

RATLAM, 30 SEPT

Police have detained a teenage boy for allegedly sexually assaulting a five-year-old girl on the premises of a school in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam city, an official said.

The incident came to light after the girl told her mother about "bad touch" by the boy, the official said on Sunday.

The accused is the son of a watchman at the private school, where the victim is a UKG student. The incident occurred in the watchman's room on the third floor of the school building and was reported by the girl to her mother on the night of 27 September. "The accused is a student of class 10 with another branch of the same school. . The boy has been taken into custody," officials said. —PTI

BIHAR FLOOD WORSENS

An NDRF personnel rescues a baby and a family in Bihar's flood affected Supaul district, on Monday. Flood situation in several parts of Bihar worsened as embankments of Kosi river in Darbhanga district and Bagmati river in Sitamarhi were breached PHOTO: PTI

'CAN'T LOSE TALENT'

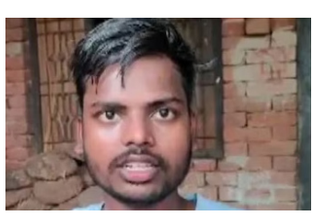
SC asks IIT to admit Dalit youth who lost seat over fees

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday came to the rescue of a Dalit youth, who had lost his seat in IIT Dhanbad after missing the deadline to deposit a fee, by asking the institute to admit him to the BTech course.

"We cannot allow such a young talented boy to go away. He cannot be left in lurch," a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said.

The top court used its extraordinary powers under Article 142 in asking the IIT Dhanbad to admit Atul Kumar into its Electrical Engineering BTech course. "We are of the view that a talented student like the petitioner who belongs to a marginalised group who did all to secure admission should not be left out," the bench said in the order.



Atul Kumar PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

The parents of Atul Kumar, 18, failed to deposit Rs 17,500 as the acceptance fee by 24 June, the deadline for depositing the requisite fees for blocking the seat. The parents also approached National Commission for Scheduled Castes, Jharkhand Legal Services Authority and the Madras High Court to save the seat. Kumar, the son of a daily wager, hails from a below poverty line family living at Titora village in Muzaffarnagar of Uttar Pradesh. The National Commission for Scheduled Castes also expressed its inability to help him. As he had taken JEE at a centre in Jharkhand, the youth had also moved the Jharkhand State Legal Services Authority which suggested him to approach the Madras High Court as it was IIT Madras that had conducted the exam. —PTI

IN BIG RESHUFFLE, ODISHA SHIFTS 55 IPS OFFICERS

BHUBANESWAR, 30 SEPT

In a major reshuffle, the Odisha government has transferred 55 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, including Superintended of Police (SPs) of 21 districts, according to notifications.

Senior IPS officer AK Ray of the 1988 batch was appointed Director General (Prisons and Correctional Services), while Vinaytosh Mishra of the 1993 batch was made Additional Director General (Crime Branch). RP Koche was made the new Director of Intelligence, Arun Bothra was appointed ADG (Railways & Coastal Security) and Saumyendra Kumar Priyadarsi was named the new ADG (Modernisation), according to a notification issued on Sunday. —PTI

Bajaj manager kills self over work pressure

LUCKNOW, 30 SEPT

A manager of Bajaj Finance allegedly died by suicide at his residence in Jhansi due to work-related pressure. Police said his family handed over a purported suicide note that they found.

The victim Tarun Saxena said in a note that his seniors at work had been pressuring him to meet his targets for the past two months and threatening him with salary deductions ad job termination.

Tarun, a resident of Gumnawara in Navabad, was the area manager for Bajaj Finance Company. His job primarily involved loan recovery from regions including Talbehat, Moth, and Badgaon. However, the continuous heavy rainfall in these areas had destroyed crops, making it difficult for farmers to pay their EMIs. Despite these circumstances, the company did not adjust Tarun's targets, adding to his mounting stress.

In a five-page letter addressed to his wife, Tarun wrote that he was under immense stress because he could not meet targets despite trying his best. "I am very tense about the future. I have lost my ability to think. I am going," he wrote.

"I have not slept for 45 days. I have hardly eaten. I am under a lot of stress. Senior managers are pressuring me to meet targets at any cost or quit."

Family members confirmed that he had been extremely stressed in recent months. —PTI

BODIES FOUND 56 YEARS LATER

56 years after an IAF's AN-12 aircraft crashed on the Rohtang Pass in Himachal Pradesh, frozen bodies of four soldiers of the Indian Army were recovered from the wreckage by an Army team in India's longest-running search and recovery operation. The tragedy dates back to 7 February, 1968, when an IAF AN-12 aircraft, carrying 102 passengers, went missing after taking off from Chandigarh and encountering severe weather conditions near Rohtang Pass

PHOTO: PTI

Israel invading Lebanon is a mistake, here's why

The death of Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut on 27 September has left the militant Lebanese organisation leaderless at a critical time.

Two days earlier in a speech broadcast around the world, the head of the Israel Defence Forces' (IDF) northern command, Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, had told his soldiers to prepare for a possible incursion into Lebanon.

There is every reason to believe Friday's airstrike, which targeted Hezbollah's headquarters building in the southern Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh, was in preparation for a possible incursion. It came after days of strikes which Israel claims have eliminated much of Hezbollah's senior leadership.

Halevi told his troops on 25 September that they would "go in, destroy the enemy there, and decisively destroy" Hezbollah's infrastructure. As Hezbollah is embedded within the Lebanese population, this strategy promises the deaths of innocent civilians.

Since 2006, both Hezbollah and the IDF have sought to avoid a direct confrontation. For years, they have played tit-for-tat with the rationale of proportionality to prevent an all-out war.

Although the horrific 7 October attacks on Israel by Hamas triggered a resumption of hostilities, until last week both sides were calling for restraint. What has changed? Is a ground invasion now inevitable? And if so, what would that mean for Hezbollah and Lebanon?

Israel has a track record of engaging in military adventures in Lebanon that have only ever served to make its opponents stronger in the long term. The destruction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) did not prevent the emergence of Hamas – indeed, it helped to create it.

While both sides have been preparing for a new conflict for years, the trigger for the escalation began on 18 September, when Israel struck the first blow by detonating thousands of pagers and mobile devices owned by Hezbollah operatives, killing at least 32 and injuring several thousand people.

A boy who fled with his family amid ongoing Israeli strikes, sleeps at a street in down town Beirut, Lebanon, on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

This technological attack had been years in the making and could be described as a strategic masterstroke to disable the enemy. The timing appears to have been because Hezbollah was becoming suspicious about the devices, so the IDF had to act or lose the "surprise". This suggests operational considerations are taking precedence over strategic and political ones, which research suggests is rarely a good idea.

Nonetheless, these strikes are believed to have crippled Hezbollah's command in the short term, and emboldened the IDF's leadership. On 18 September, Israel's defence minister, Yoav Gallant, told Israeli troops: "We are at the start of a new phase in the war — it requires courage, determination and perseverance." While he made no mention of the exploding devices, he praised the work of Israel's army and security agencies, noting their results were excellent.

A tactic used in recent days by the IDF is one that has been developed over many years on the "Blue Line" – the de facto border that divides Israel and Lebanon. Emboldened by the failure of the IDF to defeat it in the July war of 2006, Hezbollah's senior operatives have been active and visible on the Blue Line, which is monitored closely by the IDF.

This has had devastating consequences for the Lebanese population. The Health Ministry stated on Friday that 1,540 people had been killed since 8 October 2023, with thousands of innocent civilians injured. Over 70,000 civilians have reportedly registered in 533 shelters across Lebanon, with an estimated 1 million people having been displaced from their homes.

Can Hezbollah fight back?

The death of Nasrallah has left Hezbollah temporarily leaderless, while the killing of several of its senior figures has deprived it of seasoned commanders, many of whom had recent combat experience in Syria. And the bombing of south Lebanon is reducing Hezbollah's supply of rockets and other weapons.

However, Israel should not assume that Hezbollah is out of the game or underestimate the group. Hezbollah's real strength has always lain in its ability to melt into the population – and it will be ready to commence a war of attrition with hit-and-run tactics if the IDF makes the mistake of putting boots on the ground again. The fact that all five previous invasions failed should be an indication that the outcome may be a repeat of what occurred between 1982 and 2006.

Furthermore, while Iran's response to the escalation has been muted thus far, it is unlikely to abandon Hezbollah. A long, drawn-out, low-intensity conflict would favour the kind of asymmetric tactics used by the "axis of resistance", which also includes Lebanon's neighbour, Syria.

In Lebanon, the Palestine issue has always been regarded as the primary cause of the civil war that took place from 1975 to 1990. As such, the IDF is banking on Lebanese people turning against Hezbollah for bringing a new war down on them as a result of its rocket barrages into northern Israel, in solidarity with Hamas since the October 7 attack.

The stated IDF aim is to drive Hezbollah back north of the Litani river, to force it to comply with UN resolution 1701 and allow displaced people in northern Israel to return to their homes. But it is naive of Israel and the IDF to think that an invasion or a bombing campaign, no matter how successful in the short term, will enable Israeli civilians to live in peace along the Blue Line for the long term.

Ultimately, the only way forward is for both parties to come to the table and negotiate. The human cost of Israel's current strategy in Lebanon is appalling to contemplate, and in all likelihood will create more hatred – fostering a new generation of anti-Israel fighters, rather than creating the basis for peace.

—PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

NASA astronauts welcome SpaceX capsule for return

The two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station since June welcomed their new ride home with Sunday's arrival of a SpaceX capsule.

SpaceX launched the rescue mission on Saturday with a downsized crew of two astronauts and two empty seats reserved for Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who will return next year. The Dragon capsule docked in darkness high over Botswana as the two craft soared 420 kilometres above Earth.

NASA switched Wilmore and Williams to SpaceX following concerns over the safety of their Boeing Starliner capsule. It was the first Starliner test flight with a crew, and NASA decided the thruster failures and helium leaks that cropped up after liftoff were too serious and poorly understood to risk the test pilots' return. So Starliner returned to Earth empty earlier this month.

The Dragon carrying NASA's Nick Hague and the Russian Space Agency's Alexander Gorbunov will remain at the space station until February, turning what should have been a weeklong trip for Wilmore and Williams into a mission lasting more than eight months.

Two NASA astronauts were pulled from the mission to make room for Wilmore and Williams on the return leg.

NASA likes to replace its station crews every six months or so. SpaceX has provided the taxi service since the company's first astronaut flight in 2020. NASA also hired Boeing for ferry flights after the space shuttles were retired, but flawed software and other Starliner issues led to years of delays and more than USD 1 billion in repairs.

Starliner inspections are underway at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, with post-flight reviews of data set to begin this week.

"We're a long way from saying, 'Hey, we're writing off Boeing'," NASA's associate administrator Jim Free said at a pre-launch briefing.

The arrival of two fresh astronauts means the four who have been up there since March can now return to Earth in their own SpaceX capsule in just over a week. Their stay was extended a month because of the Starliner turmoil.

Although Saturday's liftoff went well, SpaceX said the rocket's spent upper stage ended up outside its targeted impact zone in the Pacific because of a bad engine firing. The company has halted all Falcon launches until it figures out what went wrong.

—PTI

NASA switched Wilmore and Williams to SpaceX following concerns over the safety of their Boeing Starliner capsule ***PHOTO:***

- SpaceX has provided the taxi service since the company's first astronaut flight in 2020. NASA also hired Boeing for ferry flights after space shuttles were retired

NASA's SpaceX Crew joins Expedition 72 aboard International Space Station to return back home next year ***PHOTO: NASA***

With no govt funding, Mangaluru's Dasara is a common man's Dasara

The entire expenses of Dasara are borne by the devotees and philanthropists of Mangaluru ***PHOTO: PTI***

Although Mysuru's Dasara grabs all the attention in Karnataka, the coastal city of Mangaluru has its own version of Dasara festivities, thanks to the Kudroli Gokarnanatha temple.

The temple takes the lead in organising the Dasara procession, the installation of Navadurga idols, and giving the required colour and gaiety to the festivities.

According to the organisers, it is estimated that this year, the Mangaluru Dasara will see more than five lakh people during the procession, and 12 lakh people are expected to visit the temple during the Navratri festivities, equivalent to the crowds drawn by the Mysore Dasara.

However, the Mangaluru Dasara does not have government or royal patronage like its famous cousin in Mysuru, said temple officials.

The entire expenses of Dasara are borne by the devotees and philanthropists of Mangaluru, said Rajya Sabha member B Janardhana Poojary, who was instrumental in the temple's growth.

Speaking to the PTI, while overseeing the preparations for the Dasara festivities commencing on 3 October, Poojary said, "It has come to be known as the common man's Dasara. We have no royal patronage or government support; all the celebrations are for 13 days (this time 14 days due to Ekadashi)."

According to Poojary, Gokarnanatha temple came about because Sahukar Koragappa, a Billava community leader, took it upon himself to have a temple for their community as they were denied the right of entry to temples by upper caste Hindus. So, in 1912, he brought the 19th-century philosopher and social reformer Narayana Guru from Kerala to Mangaluru to consecrate the Shiva Lingam, which he brought from Kerala along with him.

The Kshetra was named 'Gokarnanatha' by Narayana Guru, said Poojary.

Through these humble beginnings, the Gokarnanatha Temple has now become a world centre for Billavas and a strong Shiva temple not just in Dakshina Kannada but in entire South India, he said.

The Kshetra started the tradition of consecrating the Navadurgas for the Dasara festival in the year 1991. The Navadurgas in their different avatars, as mentioned in the Puranas, are installed here, which has become a speciality of Kudroli temple, said temple officials.

- According to the organisers, it is estimated that this year, the Mangaluru Dasara will see more than five lakh people during the procession, and 12 lakh people are expected to visit the temple during the Navratri festivities, equivalent to the crowds drawn by the Mysore Dasara

Mahagowri, Mahakali, Kathyayini, Shailaputhri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kooshmandini, Skandamatha, and Siddhi Dhatri are the Navadurga Avatharas.

This is the only temple in the country that offers poojas to all nine forms of Durgas, said the temple authorities.

Sharada, the goddess of knowledge, is at the centre stage. On the last three days, the Sharada Mahotsava has added to the colour of Navadurga poojas. The Sharada matha idol is stated to be one of the largest in the country, said Padmaraj Ramaiah, treasurer of the temple.

On the last day of the Navratri-Vijayadashami, the grand procession includes a five-kilometre-long lineup of tableaux (over 75 of them) coming from all over the state and some from outside, he added.

According to him, more than 30 troupes of folk dancers from Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh also take part in the procession.

"All Navadurga idols mounted on truck platforms with dazzling displays of lights take part in the procession. The all-night affair keeps Mangaluru city awake all night," added Ramaiah.

Ramaiah told PTI that all efforts are being taken to ensure public safety.

"We have already sensitised the district administration and the Mangaluru City Police Commissionerate about the security requirements. We also have our volunteers who will be assisting the police in regulating traffic, managing parking, and crowd movement.

We have also advised the concessionaires who will be exhibiting and trading their wares at the festival site to maintain hygiene and cleanliness at all times," he said.

—PTI

PHOTO: PTI

Imran Khan booked in new terrorism cases

ISLAMABAD, 30 SEPT

Punjab police has registered three new cases against Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan following a protest by his party on his call at Rawalpindi's Liaquat Bagh area on Saturday. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder was booked on Sunday under the Anti-Terrorism Act along with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and party chairman Barrister Gohar Khan, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. The complaints filed by the New Town and Civil Lines police stations of Rawalpindi also included charges of attempted murder, violations of Section 144 and other terrorism-related offences. According to the charges, the 71-year-old leader incited his supporters to protest against national institutions while issuing directives from Adiala Jail where he has been incarcerated more than a year. *—PTI*

JD Vance and Tim Walz to meet for VP debate today

ATLANTA, 30 SEPT

Republican JD Vance and Democrat Tim Walz will meet Tuesday in the lone Vice Presidential debate of the 2024 election, bringing together undercards who have spent two months going after each other and the opposing nominees who top the major-party tickets. The matchup, hosted by CBS News in New York, might not carry the same stakes as the 10 September debate between former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris. It sets up a potentially fierce night in Manhattan. Walz' ratings, on the other hand, show he is viewed net favourably by 3.8 percentage points, a smaller margin than a nine-point net favourable rating when he was announced, 538 data shows. *—Agencies*

Wildfire in South Greece leaves 2 people dead

ATHENS, 30 SEPT

Two people died overnight in a large wildfire burning through forestland near a seaside resort in southern Greece, authorities said. The fire service said about 350 firefighters, assisted by eight water-dropping aircraft, managed early Monday to largely bring under control the blaze near Xylokastro in the Peloponnese region. Half a dozen villages were ordered evacuated overnight as a precaution after the blaze broke out on Sunday. The flames were fanned on by very strong winds blowing through forests left tinder-dry by a warm spring and hot summer. Sources said the two dead were believed to be local residents. *—PTI*

Woman claims she was raped 50 times at Osho ashram

LONDON, 30 SEPT

A UK-based 54-year-old Prem Sargam in an interview recalled the nightmares she had gone through in her young age starting from six when she was sexually abused or raped for about 50 times in the Rajneesh cult alias Osho cult ashram and other ashrams. Sargam narrated how she was forced to undergo sexual abuse as a minor in the name of "free love." She recalled how Osho's Sannyasin spiritual movement was introduced to Sargam by her parents and the philosophy that children asked to watch sex often and girls reaching a pubic age should be guided by adult men on their sexual journeys. Later, the women added that she was sent to the Medina ashram in Suffolk, for attending a "boarding school" programme where the exploitation continued adding that she was raped 50 times until she joined an ashram in Oregon along with her mother at age of 12. *—Agencies*

Israel hits central Beirut after a year

Israeli strike kills a family of 4 in central Gaza; France delivers 12 tonnes of aid to Lebanon

JERUSALEM, 30 SEPT

An apparent Israeli airstrike on central Beirut has levelled an apartment building. It came after Israel hit targets across Lebanon and killed dozens of people as Hezbollah sustained heavy blows to its command structure, including the killing of its leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

The airstrike, the first to hit central Beirut in nearly a year of conflict, hit a multistory residential building. Ambulances and a crowd gathered near the building in a mainly Sunni district with a busy thoroughfare lined with shops.

Separately, an Israeli airstrike early Monday killed a family of four in central Gaza, Palestinian officials said. In the past week, Israel has frequently targeted Beirut's southern suburbs, where Hezbollah has a strong presence — including a major strike on Friday that killed Nasrallah — but had not hit locations near the city centre.

The Lebanese Health Ministry said at least 105 people were killed around the country in airstrikes on Sunday. Two strikes near the southern city of Sidon, about 45 kilometres south of Beirut, killed at least 32 people, the ministry said.

Separately, Israeli strikes in the northern province of Baalbek Hermel killed 21 people and wounded at least 47. Lebanese media reported dozens of strikes in the central, eastern and western Bekaa and in the south, besides strikes on Beirut. Israel says it targets militants, but the strikes have hit buildings where civilians were living and the death toll was expected to rise.

Palestinian medical officials say an Israeli airstrike killed six people, including two sisters and a child, in central Gaza. Yemen's Houthi rebels claim they shot down another American-made MQ-9 Reaper drone over the country. The Palestinian militant group Hamas says one of its commanders has been killed in an Israeli airstrike in Lebanon. *—PTI*

Israeli soldiers work on tanks and armoured personnel carriers in Northern Israel, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

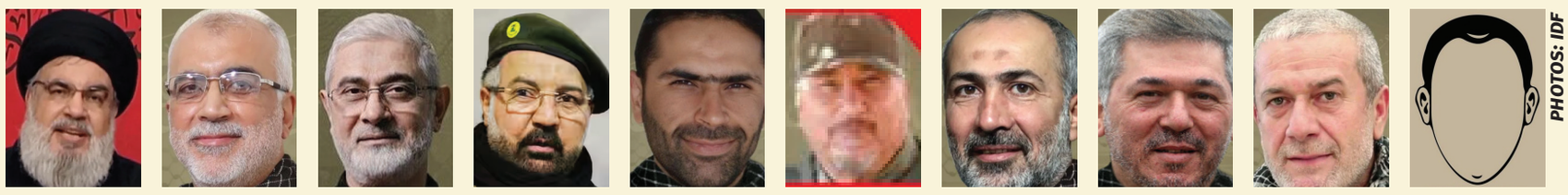
Hezbollah vows to fight on after Nasrallah's death

Hezbollah's deputy leader vowed to continue fighting Israel and said the militant group was prepared for a long war after much of its top command was wiped out, including its leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

In his first speech since Nasrallah was killed, Naim Kassem said in a televised statement on Monday that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, Hezbollah fighters are ready to fight and defend Lebanon. As deputy secretary-general, Naim Kassem now is the acting leader of Hezbollah until a replacement for Nasrallah is chosen.

Kassem added that despite the killing of Hezbollah's top military commanders over the past months, Hezbollah is relying on new commanders. France has delivered 12 tonnes of medical aid to Lebanon. *—PTI*

A billboard with a huge portrait of slain Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is installed on a building, in downtown Tehran, Iran, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**



PHOTOS: IDF

HASSAN NASRALLAH — Secretary-General of Hezbollah

IBRAHIM MUHAMMED QABISI — Head of the Missile and Rockets Force

IBRAHIM AQIL — Head of Operations and Commander of the Radwan Force

FUAD SHUKR — Highest ranking military commander

WISSAM AL-TAWIL — Commander of the Radwan force

ABU HASSAN SAMIR — Head of Radwan Force's Training Unit

MUHAMMED HUSEEIN SROUR — Commander of the Aerial Command

SAMI TALEB ABDULLAH — Commander of the Nasser Unit

MOHAMMED NASSER — Commander of the Aziz Unit

ABU ALI RIDA — Commander ofthe Bader Unit

Japan's likely PM calls for election on 27 Oct

TOKYO, 30 SEPT

Shigeru Ishiba, the head of Japan's governing party, said on Monday he plans to call a parliamentary election to be held on 27 October after he is elected as prime minister on Tuesday.

Ishiba was chosen as the Liberal Democratic Party's leader on Friday and is assured to also succeed Fumio Kishida as prime minister because the party's coalition controls parliament.

Ishiba mentioned the election date as he announced his top party leadership lineup Monday ahead of forming his Cabinet.

The plan is not official since he is not prime minister yet, but Ishiba said he mentioned the date early for the logistical convenience of those who have to prepare on relatively short notice.

Considered a defence policy expert, Ishiba secured a come-from-behind win against Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, a staunch conservative who hoped to become the country's first female prime minister, in Friday's vote.

The LDP has had a nearly unbroke tenure governing Japan since World War II. The party members may have seen Ishiba's more centrist views as crucial in pushing back challenges by the liberal-leaning opposition and winning voter support as the party reels from corruption scandals that drove down outgoing Kishida's popularity. *—PTI*

Shigeru Ishiba **PHOTO: X@JAKPOST**

- Ishiba mentioned the election date as he announced his top party leadership lineup Monday ahead of forming his Cabinet

Chairman and top candidate of Austria's Freedom Party Herbert Kickl, celebrates news of the expected election results last night **PHOTO: EPA**

Austria's Freedom Party secures first Far-Right win

VIENNA, 30 SEPT

The Freedom Party secured the first far-right national parliamentary election victory in post-World War II Austria on Sunday, finishing ahead of the governing conservatives after tapping into anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other issues. But its chances of governing were unclear.

Preliminary official results showed the Freedom Party finishing first with 29.2 per cent of the vote and Chancellor Karl Nehammer's Austrian People's Party was second with 26.5 per cent, according to a near-complete count, national public broadcaster ORF reported. The centre-left Social Democrats were in third place with 21 per cent. The outgoing government -- a coalition of Nehammer's party and the environmentalist Greens -- lost its majority in the lower house of parliament.

Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021, wants to be chancellor.

But to become Austria's new leader, he would need a coalition partner to command a parliamentary majority. Rivals have said they won't work with Kickl in government. The far right has benefited from frustration over high inflation, the war in Ukraine and the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also built on worries about migration.

The Freedom Party also calls for an end to sanctions against Russia, is highly critical of Western military aid to Ukraine and wants to bow out of the European Sky Shield Initiative, a missile defence project launched by Germany. *—PTI*

JAPAN'S INDEX SINKS 4.7% AFTER PM ELECTIONS

TOKYO, 30 SEPT

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index tumbled nearly 5 per cent early Monday after the country's ruling Liberal Democrats chose Shigeru Ishiba, a former defence minister, as the next prime minister.

Ishiba is due Tuesday to succeed current Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who resigned as his popularity rating sank. After winning the party's vote on Friday, Ishiba said he would mostly continue with Kishida's approach to trying to revive Japan's sluggish economic growth.

Markets viewed Ishiba's top rival, Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, as a more investor friendly option, analysts said. The Nikkei was trading down 4.4 per cent at 38,062.06 about an hour after the markets opened. Ishiba has expressed support for the Bank of Japan's efforts to raise interest rates after many years of keeping them near zero percent. That helped push the yen higher against the US dollar, and exporters' shares plunged, with Toyota Motor Corp. down 6.2 per cent early Monday. Honda Motor Co.'s shares fell 6.8 per cent and Nissan Motor Co.'s declined 5.8 per cent.

Ishiba on Friday stressed Japan needs to reinforce its security, noting recent violations of Japanese airspace by Russian and Chinese warplanes and repeated missile launches by North Korea. He pledged to continue Kishida's economic policy aimed at pulling Japan out of deflation and achieving real salary increases, while tackling challenges such as Japan's declining birthrate and population and resilience to natural disasters. *—PTI*

FLOODS WREAK HAVOC

Nearly 200 killed in Nepal floods & landslides, 30 missing

KATHMANDU, 30 SEPT

The death toll from rain-induced floods and landslides across Nepal reached nearly 200, with at least 30 people still missing as search and rescue operations continued for the third consecutive day on Monday.

Incessant rainfall over the weekend triggered floods and landslides, wreaking havoc in the Himalayan nation. At least 192 people have been killed in the continuous rainfall, floods, landslides and inundation, according to Home Ministry Spokesperson Rishiram Tiwari.

He said 194 others have also been injured nationwide in the disaster, while 30 others remain missing. A meeting by Prime Minister Prakash Man Singh at the Prime Minister's Office in Singha Durbar decided to enhance rescue, relief, and re-establishment efforts. *—PTI*

Nepali Army personnel evacuate people from a flood-affected area, in Nepal, on Monday **PHOTOS: PTI**

US: HELENE DEATH TOLL RISES TO NEARLY 100

North Carolina officials pledged to get more water and other supplies to flood-stricken areas by Monday after Hurricane Helene left a trail of destruction across the US Southeast and the death toll from the storm rose to nearly 100. At least 91 people across several states were killed. A North Carolina county that includes the mountain city of Asheville reported 30 people killed. Biden also hinted that he may visit the areas. *—PTI*

TYPHOON KRATHON LASHES NORTH PHILIPPINES

A powerful typhoon was lashing the northernmost islands of the Philippines on Monday, prompting officials to evacuate villagers, shut down schools and inter-island ferries and warn of "potentially very destructive" damage to coastal villages. Typhoon Krathon was last tracked over the coastal waters of Balintang island with sustained winds of up to 175 kilometres per hour and gusts of up to 215 kilometres per hour. *—PTI*

STEM CELL TRANSPLANT

Chinese scientists claim to have reversed type 1 diabetes: Report

BEIJING, 30 SEPT

Chinese scientists claimed to have cured a chronic type-1 diabetes patient using cell transplants in what was stated to be the first such case in the world.

The patient, a 25-year-old woman who had the chronic condition for over a decade, was able to naturally regulate her blood sugar some two and half months after undergoing the minimally invasive surgery, the Shanghai-based Chinese news outlet, The Paper reported.

According to the report carried by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post, the surgery took just half an hour. The team behind the breakthrough published their findings in the peer-reviewed journal Cell last week.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Researchers from Tianjin First Central Hospital and Peking University were among those who took part in the study, the report said. Islet cells in the pancreas are responsible for producing hormones like insulin and glucagon which are then released into the bloodstream and help to control glucose levels.

To do this, the researchers first collected adipose tissue cells from the patient and used small molecule chemicals to re-programme these cells into pluripotent stem cells. These cells were then transformed into islet cells and transplanted back into the patient's body. Because these pancreatic cells originated from the patient, there was no immune rejection. The patient's fasting blood glucose levels gradually normalised, and her need for external insulin steadily decreased. She completely stopped needing insulin injections 75 days after the transplant, and the improvement has lasted for over a year. *—PTI*

RUSSIA TO FULFIL ALL GOALS SET IN UKRAINE: PUTIN

MOSCOW, 30 SEPT

The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, has released a video message released to mark the second anniversary of what Russia calls "Reunification Day" – two years since Moscow formally claimed the regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia.

Having held referendums – widely condemned as shams – in the four regions on 30 September 2022, Putin signed a document with the Russian-installed leaders of the occupied regions to unilaterally incorporate them into the Russian Federation.Since Russia's full-scale invasion was launched in February 2022, Kyiv has stepped up its pursuit of Nato and EU membership, steps that it regards as vital for its self-defenc. *—Courtesy, The Guardian*

Sensex tanks 1,272 pts, Nifty below 25K mark

Reliance & Axis Bank decline over 3%; ICICI, Nestle, Mahindra were among laggards

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Equity benchmark indices tumbled nearly 1.5 per cent on Monday due to heavy selling in frontline stocks Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank amid rising geo-political risks in the Middle East and weakness in Japanese markets.

Besides, profit-taking after a record-breaking rally and foreign fund outflows added to the gloom, analysts said.

The BSE Sensex tumbled 1,272.07 points or 1.49 per cent to settle at 84,299.78. During the day, it plunged 1,314.71 points or 1.53 per cent to 84,257.14.

The NSE Nifty tanked 368.10 points or 1.41 per cent to 25,810.85.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Reliance Industries and Axis Bank declined over 3 per cent each. ICICI Bank, Nestle, Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, State Bank of India and Tata Motors were the other major laggards.

In contrast, JSW Steel, NTPC, Tata Steel, Titan and Asian Paints were the gainers.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled with deep cuts, while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended sharply higher.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index tanked nearly 5 per cent on Monday. The Shanghai Composite index surged 8 per cent amid fresh stimulus measures announcement.

The BSE benchmark Sensex declined 264.27 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 85,571.85 on Friday. During the day, it climbed 142.13 points or 0.16 per cent to reach a new record intra-day peak of 85,978.25.

The Nifty dipped 37.10 points or 0.14 per cent to 26,178.95 after rising 61.3 points or 0.23 per cent to an all-time intra-day peak of 26,277.35 during the session. *—PTI*

NSE Nifty tanked 368.10 points or 1.41 per cent to 25,810.85 **PHOTO: PTI**

Zomato & BEL shares decline

Zomato share price declined over 2 per cent on Monday, extending losses for the fifth straight session. Zomato shares fell as much as 2.19 per cent to a low of Rs 272.15 apiece on the BSE. In the past five sessions, Zomato shares have plunged more than 8 per cent. Shares of state-owned Bharat Electronics, slipped into the red on its debut trading day after joining the benchmark index. *—Agencies*

Investors under 30 yrs dominate Indian mkt

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Indian stock market is now dominated by the young investors of age below 30 years, highlighted official data by the National Stock Exchange.

As per the data, the number of young investors have surged rapidly in the Indian stock markets. It highlighted that between March 2018 and August 2024, there has been a remarkable increase in the share of investors under 30 years old. In March 2018, this age group made up only 22.9 per cent of the total investor base.

However, by August 2024, their share had grown significantly to 40 per cent, reflecting a rapid rise in the participation of young investors in the stock market.

As per NSE, the investors of 30-39 and 40-49 age groups, for instance, have seen their representation in the market remain relatively steady during this period, without major changes in their respective shares. In contrast, older age groups have shown a clear decline in their involvement in the stock market. *—PTI*

Indian mkt to be volatile ahead of US polls

Indian stock markets opened with a decline on Monday as the upcoming US election increases volatility in equities worldwide. According to experts, as markets enter October, volatility tends to increase due to the US Presidential election season. However, they expect the stock rally to return once the elections conclude. He further stated on US election effect on stock markets "Fasten seatbelts for an interesting October but stay invested. *—ANI*

Gold remains flat at ₹78,300/10g; silver plummets ₹2,000

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Gold prices remained flat at Rs 78,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. After rising for nine consecutive days, gold had touched its all-time high mark of Rs 78,300 per 10 grams on Friday. However, silver plummeted by Rs 2,000 to Rs 92,500 per kg, snapping a three-day rising streak in the local markets on Monday. It had finished at Rs 94,500 per kg in the previous close. In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for October delivery went up by Rs 42 or 0.06 per cent to Rs 74,900 per 10 grams. Silver contracts for December delivery declined Rs 586 or 0.64 per cent to trade at Rs 90,812 per kg on the exchange. In the Asian trading hours, Comex gold was trading 0.06 per cent higher at USD 2,669.60 per ounce. *—ANI*

Rupee settles 11P lower at 83.80 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Rupee depreciated 11 paise to settle at 83.80 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, taking cues from equity markets that saw a steep fall of over 1 per cent amid volatile crude oil prices and outflow of foreign funds. However, a weak greenback against major currencies supported the local unit, forex traders said, while investors showed muted participation awaiting cues from domestic macroeconomic data to be released this week. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 83.72 and hit the intra-day low of 83.81 against the greenback during the session. The unit finally settled at 83.80 (provisional) against dollar, registering a loss of 11 paise from its previous closing level. On Friday, the rupee fell 3 paise to settle at 83.69 against the American currency. *—PTI*

Govt extends I-T audit report filing date to 7 Oct

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The income tax department has extended the date for filing audit report for 2023-24 by 7 days till 7 October. In a circular, the I-T department said considering the difficulties faced by taxpayers in electronic filing of various audit reports under the Income Tax Act, the deadline is being extended from 30 September to 7 October. Moore Singhi Executive Director Rajat Mohan said technological issues in electronic filing of tax audit reports have pushed the government to extend timelines by 7 more days. "Load of filings is quite high on the portal in the last few days, throwing the entire ecosystem in a frenzy. Government should either upgrade the system to handle such rush or stagger the timelines for tax filings," Mohan said. *—PTI*

Assessment for AI-Vistara completed: Official

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

A comprehensive enterprise assessment of all systems has been completed and the integration process is going on as part of the upcoming merger of Vistara with Air India, a senior official said on Monday. Vistara, a joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines, is set to be merged with Air India in November. The process for the merger of the two full service carriers, announced in November 2022, is in progress. Speaking at a session at the CAPA India Digital Aviation Summit in the national capital, he also said a comprehensive enterprise assessment of all systems has been completed with respect to the merger of Vistara and Air India. At the session, regional carrier FLY91's CTO Prasanna Subramanian said it is building the complete architecture for the digital systems. The systems are being scaled up and the focus is also on data. *—PTI*

AGAINST SPECTRUM

Airtel prepays ₹ 8,465 cr to DoT in 2016 acquisition

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Telecom operator Bharti Airtel on Monday said it has prepaid Rs 8,465 crore to the government against spectrum it acquired in 2016.

These liabilities carried an interest rate of 9.3 per cent, the company said in a statement.

"Bharti Airtel, one of India's leading telecommunications service providers, today said that it has prepaid Rs 8,465 crore to the Department of Telecom (Government of India) against spectrum acquired in 2016," the statement said.

Airtel, the second largest telecom operator in India, had acquired 173.8 MHz spectrum in 1800, 2100 and 2300 MHz bands through 2016 spectrum auctions for Rs 14,244 crore.

It is pertinent to mention here that in June this year, Airtel said it prepaid Rs 7,904 crore to the Department of Telecom, in the process of clearing all deferred liabilities pertaining to spectrum acquired in 2012 and 2015 through auction.

Back on 31 July, 2023, Airtel disclosed it prepaid Rs 8,024 crore to the government towards part prepayment of deferred liabilities pertaining to spectrum acquired in the 2015 auction.

While Bharti Airtel bid and won airwaves worth Rs 6,856.76 crore, rival Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio - the market leader - got Rs 973.62 crore worth of spectrum least in three-corner contest. *—PTI*

India needs more time for transition from coal: Experts

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

As the UK officially shut down its last remaining coal power plant on Monday, policy experts said coal will continue to be a part of India's energy mix for the next few decades, given that it is still a developing country with significant energy needs.

The UK on Monday closed its last coal power plant, becoming the first G7 nation to do so amid calls for a global coal-free energy system by 2040.

The world's first coal power plant opened in London in 1882, and until 2012, coal accounted for 39 per cent of the UK's electricity generation.

Global energy think tank Ember said the closure of the UK's last coal plant means that more than a third of OECD countries are now coal-free, with three-quarters expected to eliminate coal power by 2030, in line with global climate goals aimed at limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

These developments occur as developed countries push developing countries to accelerate the phase-down of unabated coal power.

India, the world's second-largest consumer of coal for electricity generation after China, saw the share of coal-fired power generation rise to 75 per cent in 2023-24 from 71 per cent in 2019-20. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

L&T gets order for energy systems in South India

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Larsen & Toubro on Monday said it has got an order to develop and implement energy management systems in the country's southern region.

The order has been bagged by the digital energy solutions arm of Larsen & Toubro's power transmission & distribution vertical.

The company said in an stock exchange filing that it has "received the mandate to develop and implement energy management systems in regional and state load dispatch centres in south India".

As part of the order, energy management system and associated software systems will be implemented for 12 set of control rooms.

These systems are being implemented for main and backup configurations for the Southern Regional Load Dispatch Centre and the State Load Dispatch Centers of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, it said.

The digital energy solutions arm is a specialised set-up of power system experts, which provides advanced grid services, energy consulting services and system integration solutions to speed up the digitalisation of electric grid in India, Middle East and the USA.

Through another recent order, the company said it will implement upgradation of power and transmission control room in the western United States. *—PTI*

BharatPe settles dispute with ex co-founder Ashneer Grover

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

BharatPe has arrived at a definitive agreement with its former co-founder Ashneer Grover, and as part of the settlement Grover will not be associated with the fintech company in any capacity nor be a part of the shareholding of the company.

BharatPe in an official statement on Monday said that certain shares of Grover shall be transferred to the 'Resilient Growth Trust' for the benefit of the Company and his remaining shares will be managed by his family trust.

"Both parties have decided not to pursue the cases filed. We wish Mr. Grover well. BharatPe continues to focus on delivering industry leading solutions to its merchants and customers driving growth with profitability," said the BharatPe statement.

Reportedly, both parties were involved in a legal dispute since Grover was removed from the position of Managing Director by the company's board in March 2022.

Ashneer Grover **PHOTO: PTI**

Taking to X after the settlement, Grover wrote he reposes his faith in the management and board, "who are doing great work in taking BharatPe forward in the right direction."

"I continue to remain aligned with the company's growth and success. I will no longer be associated with BharatPe in any capacity, nor be part of the capital table.

My remaining shares will be managed by my Family Trust. Both parties have decided not to pursue cases filed. I hope BharatPe continues to grow and succeed for the benefit of all its stakeholders," the X post added. *—ANI*

Sony India grows 21%, bets big on TV shows

HYDERABAD, 30 SEPT

Consumer electronics giant Sony India recorded a 21 per cent growth in 2023-24 and expects to continue the momentum going forward led by the trend of premiumisation in the TV and consumer electronics space, Managing Director Sunil Nayyar said on Monday.

However, the company expects a moderation in the growth rates in the current fiscal, he said, adding it "may be not to the level which we have registered last year, because of the high base effect".

Sony India is quite upbeat after having almost 40 per cent growth in festive sales during Onam in the southern market and expects a similar kind of double-digit growth in the rest part of the country during the festive season starting from Durga Puja.

PHOTO: PTI

Sony India expects the premium television segment, besides its audio and imaging products, will drive growth in the country.

Sony India gets half of its revenue from the TV business, around 20 per cent from the imaging business and the rest from audio and other businesses.

Presently India is the fourth largest market of Sony India. US, China and Japan are the top three markets for Sony globally. The company expects India to become its third largest global market. *—PTI*

'INDIA'S CONSUMER DURABLES MKT TO BE 4TH LARGEST'

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

India's consumer durables market is expected to touch a size of Rs 5 lakh crore by FY30 and will become the fourth largest in the world by 2027, industry body CII said on Monday.

While the country's products are inching towards global reliability,

it is imperative to build a robust quality ecosystem and adopt standardisation in the sector and also export Indian standards globally, said B Thiagarajan, Chairman, CII National Committee on Consumer Electronics and Durables.

Speaking at the CII Consumer Electronics & Durables Summit 2024, Thiagarajanaid the next decade is expected to create multiple opportunities across the value chain in the sector. *—ANI*

TO HAVE COUNSELLING DESK

ICAI sets up group on stress management

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI on Monday announced the setting up of a dedicated group to suggest more stress management measures and will also introduce a counselling help desk against the backdrop of the death of a chartered accountant due to alleged work pressure.

The institute will also develop peer support networks where members can share experiences, seek advice, and collaborate to address challenges related to stress management.

Chartered accountant Anna Sebastian Perayil recently died allegedly due to extreme work pressure. She worked with S R Batliboi, a member firm of EY Global.

The dedicated group will work on introducing measures to improve work-life balance and for managing stress within the profession, ICAI said in a release.

Also, a special counselling help desk will be introduced within ICAI's national call centre (9997599975) that will be dedicated to assisting members with stress management and work-life balance concerns.

This initiative comes after the death of EY employee, Anna Sebastian Perayil, due to stress and workload last week in Pune **PHOTO: PTI**

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has more than 4 lakh members and over 8 lakh students.

Among other measures, ICAI in collaboration with health institutions, will introduce stress management programmes.

In addition, it will work with industry partners to promote flexible work models.

ICAI President Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal said the institute strongly urges oganisations to implement balanced work policies that promote employee health and reduce stress. The institute already has a grievance redressal cell to address concerns from members, students, and employees, with efforts underway to enhance the system for more structured and empathetic resolutions, the release said. *—PTI*

Hindi's importance will grow: S'pore biz leader

SINGAPORE, 30 SEPT

- Theme was "Hindi Excellence in this Era of Innovation" -- reflects how language and technology open various business opportunities in today's interconnected world

The fusion of Hindi -- spoken by 57.2 crore people in India and another 50 crore globally -- with cutting-edge technology opens a realm of possibilities for businesses, allowing them to tap into vast, previously inaccessible, markets, a top Singapore business leader has said.

Neil Parekh, chairman of the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said, "As we transcend the world of digitalisation, where boundaries between cultures and markets are increasingly blurred, language has emerged as a crucial bridge connecting people, ideas and opportunities."

Speaking at the Global Hindi Excellence Summit - 2024, held over the weekend, he underscored the growing importance of Hindi for working in the fast-paced development of the Indian economy.

The theme for the summit -- "Hindi Excellence in this Era of Innovation" -- reflects how language and technology open various business opportunities in today's interconnected world, Parekh said.

He highlighted that Hindi was the third most spoken language in the world, with more than 50 crore speakers globally. *—PTI*

Champions Trophy: Govt to decide on India's travel to Pak

KANPUR, 30 SEPT

Reiterating a long-held position, BCCI Vice President Rajeev Shukla on Monday said a decision on whether the national cricket team will travel to Pakistan for next year's ICC Champions Trophy will depend on government approval. Pakistan are scheduled to host the prestigious ODI tournament from February 19 to March 9. "No decision has been taken (yet). But our policy is that for international tours, we always seek the permission of the government. It's up to the government to decide whether our team should go to any country or our team should not go to any country," Shukla told reporters here. "In this case (also), whatever the government will decide, we will abide by that," he added. Shukla was talking to the media on the sidelines of the ongoing second Test between India and Bangladesh here. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Sai Sanjay finishes on podium in British GT C'ship

BRANDS HATCH, 30 SEPT

Ace Indian driver Sai Sanjay finished creditable third overall and also made it to the podium in silver class in the GT4 category of the British GT Championship here. The 21-year Indian driver from Chennai did a commendable job in the last round of the British GT championship, where popular Tamil actor Ajith Kumar will be making his debut in the GT4 next year. Driving for Britain-based motorsports team Race-Lab, Sanjay qualified P4 overall in the class and finished third overall, in a rare feat by an Indian. Sanjay, the 2022 Indian national champion in the MRF Formula 2000, drove a McLaren Artura GT4 car in the GT4 Silver category with British driver Callum Davies, and exhibited his driving skills to bag a podium finish.—*PTI*

Sharma finishes T-57 as Hidalgo triumphs

MADRID, 30 SEPT

India's Shubhankar Sharma posted a modest final round of one-over 72 to finish in a disappointing Tied-57th place at the 2024 Acciona Open de España. Sharma, who held the spotlight with three eagles, two of them in the third, also dropped three double bogeys during the four rounds. He dropped a double in the first, third and final rounds, carding 74-70-69-72 to be one-over for the week. Spaniard Angel Hidalgo secured his maiden DP World Tour title by defeating three-time champion Jon Rahm in a playoff. The duo faced off in an all-Spanish final group alongside David Puig, with both players finishing tied at 14 under par after Rahm's birdie-birdie finish. —*PTI*

Sinner, Alcaraz through to China Open Semis

BEIJING, 30 SEPT

Top-ranked Jannik Sinner moved into the semi-finals of the China Open with a 6-2, 7-6 (6) victory over Jiri Lehecka on Monday. Just two days after the World Anti-Doping Agency announced it was seeking a ban of one to two years for the US Open champion, who tested positive twice for an anabolic steroid in March, the 23-year-old Italian didn't appear distracted as he quickly got to grips with the No. 37-ranked Lehecka's serve in a dominant first set. The defending champion faced two set points at 4-6 in the second-set tie-break, but found a way to close out his 14th consecutive win and advance to a semi-final against either fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev or local favourite No. 96-ranked Bu Yunchaokete, who play later Monday. "So happy how I handled a tough situation," Sinner said. —*AP*

A DECORATED CAREER

300

Matches: 74

Wickets: 300

Runs: 3,122

Best figure: 7/42

Average: 23.98

Economy Rate: 2.47

Jadeja becomes 2nd quickest to get 300 wickets in Test

Day 4: Bangladesh 26/2 after India declares on 285/9

KANPUR, 30 SEPT

Ravindra Jadeja on Monday became the seventh Indian to take 300 Test wickets when he dismissed Khaled Mahmud in the second game against Bangladesh here. He has become the second-fastest player in test history to the double of 300 wickets and 3000 runs.

Jadeja had Mahmud caught and bowled to bring an end to Bangladesh's first innings on day four. Bangladesh were bowled out for 233 shortly after lunch. The other Indian bowlers who have taken 300 Test wickets or more include table leader Anil Kumble (619), R Ashwin (524), Kapil Dev (434), Harbhajan Singh (417), Ishant Sharma (311) and Zaheer Khan (311). With his feat in his 74th match, Jadeja also became the second quickest to complete the double of 300 wickets and 3000 runs in Test cricket behind England great Ian Botham. Star off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin took two quick wickets to reduce Bangladesh to 26 for two in their second innings as India grabbed complete command of the rain-hit second Test at close on the fourth day.

Ravichandran Ashwin celebrates the wicket of Zakir Hasan during the match, at the Green Park stadium, on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Bangladesh still trail by 26 runs. Ashwin did the damage with a two-wicket haul (2/14). Earlier, aggressive fifties by Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul placed India in a commanding position.

Jaiswal (71 off 52 balls) and Rahul (68 off 43 balls) helped India declare their first innings at 285 for nine for a lead of 52 runs. Virat Kohli made a fluent 47 off 35 balls. For Bangladesh, veteran left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan picked four wickets (4/78) along with off-spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz (4/41) to check the free-flowing Indian batters as they scored runs in excess of eight an over.

Earlier, Bangladesh were bundled out for 233 in their first innings.Brief scores: Bangladesh: 233 all out and 26/2 in 11 overs (R. Ashwin 2/14) and India: 285/9 declared in 34.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 71, KL Rahul 68, Shakib Al Hasan 4/78, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 4/41). —*PTI*

Kohli becomes 4th player to complete 27,000 int'l runs

KANPUR, 30 SEPT

Indian batting superstar Virat Kohli on Monday became only the fourth player in history to complete 27,000 runs in international cricket across formats, a feat that he achieved on the fourth day of the ongoing second Test against Bangladesh here.

Kohli made a brisk 47 off 35 balls with four fours and a six as he helped India push on further in an aggressive mode to make up for the lost time in the Test due to incessant rains.

He is only the second Indian cricketer to have breached the 27,000-run mark and stands fourth in the list for most international runs across formats, which is headed by the legendary Sachin Tendulkar with 34,357 runs. —*PTI*

Griezmann retires from int'l soccer

PARIS, 30 SEPT

World Cup winner Antoine Griezmann took the soccer world by surprise on Monday when he announced the end of his international career with France.

The 33-year-old Atletico Madrid player has played 137 matches with Les Bleus, scoring 44 goals during a successful 10-year tenure. Griezmann started with France in 2014 in a friendly match against the Netherlands then quickly established himself as a stalwart of the team coached by Didier Deschamps with his versatile talent and influence as both a goalscorer and an assist provider.

Caps: 137
Country: France
Age: 33
Goals: 44
Assists: 38 (Most in France history)

Only two players, Hugo Lloris and Lilian Thuram, have played more international games with France than Griezmann. "It's with a heart full of memories that I close this chapter of my life," Griezmann said in a message posted on Instagram. "Thank you for this wonderful tricolor adventure and see you soon."

Griezmann is fourth on France's list of all-time scorers behind Olivier Giroud, Thierry Henry and Kylian Mbappe. He won the 2018 World Cup and the Nations League three years later with his France teammates. "After 10 incredible years, marked by challenges, successes and unforgettable moments, it is time for me to turn a page and make way for the new generation," he said. "I was lucky enough to experience some incredible moments alongside some exceptional teammates. We have shared victories that will remain forever engraved in our memories."

In his retirement message, Griezmann thanked Deschamps for his support over the last decade despite the coach's decision to make Mbappe France captain ahead of him last year following Lloris' retirement. Griezmann had previously said Deschamps' snub had been difficult to stomach. —*PTI*

Indian shooters Gautami Bhanot & Ajay Malik PHOTO:X/@ISSF_OFFICIAL

Indian shooters win 2 bronzes in Jr World C'ship

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Indian rifle and pistol shooters won two bronze medals in their respective 10m mixed team events at the ISSF Junior World Championship in Lima, Peru.

The Bronze medals on day two of the competitions at the International Shooting Sport Federation event took India's count to five medals (two gold and three bronze).

The rifle shooters went first and Gautami Bhanot and Ajay Malik shot a combined score of 628.9 after 30-shots each to finish third among 34 pairs. The performance qualified them for the bronze medal match with fourth-placed Croatian pair of Anamarija Turk and Darko Tomasevic, which they won 17-9.

China won their first gold of the competition defeating France in the final. The second Indian pair, Abhinav Shaw and Shambhavi Kshirsagar, finished sixth overall with a score of 628.1.

Lakshita and Parmod prevailed in the end, getting the better of Kanishka Dagar and Mukesh Nelavali 16-8. Germany went on to win gold while Ukraine bagged the silver.

It was Lakshita's second medal of the competition, having won a gold in the air pistol team event on Saturday. —*PTI*

COMPARING KOHLI AND BABAR BASELESS: ZAHEER

SHARJAH, 30 SEPT

Pakistan great Zaheer Abbas feels the comparisons between Virat Kohli and Babar Azam are baseless as the Indian superstar is a lot more consistent than the under-fire Pakistan batter.

Once regarded as part of the 'Fab Five' including Kohli, Steve Smith, Joe Root, and Kane Williamson, Babar is currently enduring an extended slump in form.

"Yeh fizool ki baatein hai (the comparisons are pointless). Virat Kohli scores in every match the other player (Babar) doesn't score in any match so then how can you compare. The person who scores, he is the bigger player," Abbas told.

Kohli has 80 international hundreds to his name while the much younger Babar has scored 31 centuries across formats. Abbar also acknowledged the consistency displayed by India across formats and said the Rohit Sharma-led team will be a strong contender for the upcoming Champions Trophy. —*PTI*

MESSAGE FOR INJURED

Players on rehab need to be patient: Laxman

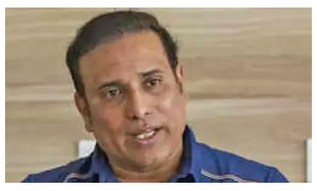
BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

BCCI's Centre of Excellence chief VVS Laxman said moving patiently through required protocols is more important than trying to achieve a preset timeline in the rehabilitation process of injured cricketers.

In the last two years, top-of-the-line cricketers such as Rishabh Pant, Jasprit Bumrah, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul and Prasidh Krishna spent several months at the National Cricket Academy (NCA), which is now a CoE, to recover from their respective injuries, sitting out of some high-value matches.

But all of them returned to the field fully fit, and, more importantly, their skillsets remained intact despite months of inaction. Laxman, who will continue to be at the helm for another one year after getting a tenure extension, detailed the process.

"There is a misconception that the timelines have to be



VVS Laxman PHOTO:PTI

met. I understand that sometimes you know that you will be fit in a particular timeframe, but sometimes the recovery won't be there (in that time) or the result won't be seen," Laxman told a select media gathering at the CoE after its inauguration on Sunday. Laxman said it's important for players to be patient while going through the rehabilitation protocols. The most vital part of the recovery period, Laxman said, was to remain mentally strong.

"The challenging part of the rehab is that the entire rehab will probably be for two-three hours in the whole day and the rest of the day they (players) have nothing to do. —*PTI*

Shuttler Raksha wins titles in Croatia, Belgium

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Young Indian badminton player Raksha Kandasamy continued her brilliant run as she clinched back-to-back titles in the Croatian International and Belgium Junior tournaments. The 16-year-old remained unbeaten throughout the two tournaments as she won each of her five games en route to her title wins. Raksha defeated England's Leona Lee 21-9, 21-5 in the final of the Croatian International played at Samobor on Sunday. She had earlier defeated Bulgaria's Stefani Stoeva 21-14, 21-23 in the semifinal and Poland's Joanna Rudna 21-11, 21-10 in the quarterfinal. Raksha crushed the challenge from Tammi van Wonterghem of Belgium 21-5, 21-8 in quarterfinals of the Junior event. Ireland's Siofra Flynn presented a strong fight against Rakha but the Indian prevailed 21-8, 19-21, 25-23 in their last-four clash. —*PTI*

Americans win Presidents Cup for 10th straight time

MONTREAL, 30 SEPT

Xander Schauffele ran off four straight birdies to lead an onslaught of red scores on the board and the Americans made the outcome as inevitable as it usually is, winning the Presidents Cup for the 10th straight time.

Sam Burns completed an unbeaten week, Russell Henley capped off his impressive debut in the Presidents Cup with a win and Keegan Bradley — the Ryder Cup captain next year — delivered the clinching point when Si Woo Kim missed a 10-foot putt putt on the 18th hole on Sunday. With five matches still on the course, the Americans had the 15 1/2 points required to win.

"The last time I played, I was the point to lose the Ryder Cup. If this is my last round as a player — maybe it is — I'm happy with that."

The Americans made a winner out of captain Jim Furyk, who was at the helm in France five years ago when they lost to Europe in the Ryder Cup. —*AP*

ISL: Chennai ready for tough fight against Hyd

HYDERABAD, 30 SEPT

Hyderabad FC would look for their first win of the season while Chennaiyin FC seek to move up the standings when the two sides face each other in an Indian Super League match here on Tuesday.

In their previous match, Hyderabad lost 0-2 to Punjab FC, while Chennaiyin succumbed to a 0-1 defeat to debutant Mohammedan Sporting. Hyderabad have a strong defensive structure that could trouble Chennaiyin.

The two teams have clashed against each other on 10 occasions in the ISL and have registered four wins each, while two matches ended in a draw. Meanwhile, CFC have scored in their previous four away matches. Their previous longest goal-scoring run in away games was 16 contests between January 2020 to February 2023.

Ahead of Tuesday's fixture, Hyderabad head coach Thangboi Singto hoped to draw inspiration from last season when his side triumphed over Chennaiyin. "I can see that the boys have gelled with each other in the last few weeks of training. So far, we have played only away games, and our next match will be at home," Singto said on the eve of the game.

"Chennaiyin FC were the only team that we beat last season. Are we going to defeat them again? I wish. "It won't be easy because of the kind of foreigners that they have brought in, and the Indian players are there; they are much better in terms of physicality and experience. It will be tough, but the only thing we can do is train and keep trying." —*PTI*

'DEEPLY CONCERNING'

IOA failed to honour Paris medallists: Usha

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha on Monday said it is "deeply concerning" that the Executive Committee members failed to honour Olympic medallists and accused the Finance Committee of blocking funds intended to support Indian athletes' preparation for the Paris Games.

India secured six medals, including two historic bronze by young shooter Manu Bhaker, but Usha said the "EC does not want to celebrate their success" and it makes her "very sad." "These athletes have made the nation proud, and it is the responsibility of the IOA to celebrate their achievements with the respect they deserve. It is deeply concerning that, even after returning home in mid-August, the EC has failed to discuss or take any steps towards organizing a formal felicitation ceremony," she said in a statement.

PT Usha reveals that a proposal for a preparatory grant of Rs 2 lakh for each Olympic-bound athlete had been blocked PHOTO:PTI

She revealed that a proposal for a preparatory grant of Rs 2 lakh for each Olympic-bound athlete and Rs 1 lakh for each coach had been blocked by the Finance Committee, notably by IOA Treasurer Sahdev Yadav.

"I strongly believe that this grant would have given our athletes and their coaches the support they needed in the crucial period leading up to the Olympic Games.

"The refusal to disburse these funds reflects a lack of understanding of the needs of athletes and shows a complete disregard for their preparation and well-being," she stated. Highlighting the contrast with previous leadership, Usha pointed out that a successful felicitation ceremony was organised for the seven medallists from the Tokyo 2021 Olympics, even amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Usha questioned the commitment of some EC members, particularly those who are former athletes. —*PTI*